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Conservation

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BEAUTIFUL BOOKS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

MEZZOTINTS

BRITISH HERALDRY

ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND

THE ART STUDENT'S VADE-MECUM

MINIATURES

JEWELLERY

BYWAYS AMONG ENGLISH BOOKS



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FRENCH—FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Page from a Book of Hours made for John, Duke of Bedford, about 1425, showing St. Mark with his Lion.

Generally known as the Bedford Missal.

(Reduced to about three-fifths dimension.)

BEAUTIFUL BOOKS

BY
CYRIL DAVENPORT, F.S.A.
Late of the British Museum

WITH 16 ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE
AUTHOR, 2 PLATES IN COLOUR AND
1 IN MONOTONE



METHUEN & CO. LTD.
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON

DAV

First Published in 1929



PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

Conservation

FOREWORD

THERE are many ways of reproducing notable objects for the illustration of books. Beautiful bindings and illuminated manuscripts have been generally shown in chromo-lithography, in the case of gold tooling it has been separately added by means of a line block made from a drawing.

I think, however, that before long the line block, the half-tone block and the three-colour process, all photographic, will entirely supersede all the old processes of book illustration, line engraving, etching, wood engraving aquatint, and lithography.

But a photo-block still requires something it likes to work from, so draughtsmen and artists will yet have plenty to do for books, and illustrated books are becoming more and more popular.

Gold-tooled bindings and bindings in relief cannot

be traced because they are not flat, so they have to be laboriously copied and the copies traced and corrected atom by atom from the original itself with a fine nib and lamp-black. From such a drawing a line block of any size can be easily made.

This pen-and-ink process was very successfully used in E. Thoinan's *Les Relieurs Français*, published at Paris in 1893, the drawings were made by J. B. Drouot and engraved on wood by Petit. Now the lens eliminates the wood engraver, and a truer version of the original drawing is the result.

I drew six small gold-tooled bindings in this way for the *Guide to the Kings Library* in the British Museum in 1901, and they were admirably reproduced by line blocks.

I think that a design properly shown in black and white affords a clearer field for appreciation and criticism than would be found in an elaborately coloured plate, where critical judgment is likely to be disturbed by light and shade and colour.

A drawing of a gold-tooled book in black and white is really a reversion to the original design from which the

gold tooling is done on the leather, because such a design is always carefully mapped out on paper, with the chosen binding stamps themselves, by the help of candle smoke, and until this black-and-white arrangement is quite satisfactory nothing is done on the leather.

I know of several more fine books that await attention, but to get them ready for publication means time and travel. If the present series meets with any appreciation I shall endeavour to supplement it in due course with some more of the drawings which give me much pleasure to do, so that I may help somewhat to popularize more of the beautiful works of bibliopegistic art that I have looked upon with much affection for a very long time.

Whitefriars Club

1929

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The Publishers acknowledge the kind help of the officials of the British Museum as regards the Frontispiece and Plate I, and the permission of Mr. Sydney Cockerell to reproduce Plate II.

BEAUTIFUL BOOKS

BEAUTIFUL BOOKS

CHAPTER I

MSS. AND THEIR BINDINGS

WHEN manuscripts were written in roll form they do not ever seem to have been preserved in any particularly ornamental way. In old Roman days rolled manuscripts were kept in boxes called *Scrinia*, and the rolls kept in any particular box seem to have been chosen as being of about the same size. Each roll had a title label tied on at the top. In one of the mosaics in the church of San Vitale at Ravenna is an admirable figure of a *scrinium* filled with labelled rolls. The box is cylindrical and has a lid and apparently a lockplate ; the mosaic is of about the fifth century of our era.

Ordinary Egyptian papyrus rolls do not appear to have ever been ornamentally bound, they were simply rolled up and tied with strips of papyrus which in some cases were sealed with mud seals. Some papyri, however, of hieratic interest, were kept in hollows cut for them in the bases of wooden statuettes of deities, and this at all events indicates a certain form of ceremonial preservation.

At a late period, about the eighth century, papyrus documents were sometimes written in page form, fastened together in the crude way that is now called 'stabbed', that is to say, perpendicular holes are bored right through the leaves at the back and then a cord of some kind is threaded through them. This same elementary process is still successfully used for thin books, known as Orihons, both in China and Japan. It is never advisable to use it unless a broad margin is left on the inner edge. A large volume of Homilies, written in Coptic about the eighth century, was treated in this way; it was found at Thebes and is covered in blind tooled goatskin, brown, and the boards are made of leaves of papyrus matted together.

The earliest illuminated manuscripts still existing are to be found among the Egyptian hieroglyphic writings on papyrus, dating from about 2500 B.C. Several of these are graphically illustrated with water-colour paintings referring to the text. A notable example of this work can be found in the Book of the Dead made for the Royal scribe Ani, about 1500 B.C. The colours found on these old pictures have lasted extremely well, and they are all simple. Black is made from burnt wood, or soot ; white from lime, chalk, zinc, or white clay ; red from red ochre or ruddle ; yellow from yellow ochre ; blue from lapis lazuli, or cobalt, or blue carbonate of copper ; and green by a mixture of yellow and blue. A clever way of producing a delicate purple was managed by using a ground wash of blue and glazing it over with a thin film of white. It is interesting to note that this same way of producing a delicate purple on fruit was made use of in recent times by the English painter W. H. Hunt.

Papyrus was the inner bark of a reed which grows abundantly near the Nile, and it was used almost universally in Europe in olden times for writing upon, but

now and then leather was also used. For writing upon, two pieces of papyrus were stuck together by a little Nile mud, the grain being laid at right angles. It was never a satisfactory material for writing on, because it is so soft that a hard pen would pierce it, and it soon becomes brittle. In museums old papyrus writings often have to be kept between two pieces of glass, and numbers of papyrus rolls cannot be unrolled because of their brittleness. The earliest known Greek manuscript, written about the third century B.C., is on papyrus, it is a prayer by 'Artemisia', and is now at Vienna.

About the second century B.C. Eumenes II, King of Pergamum, who had a large library, could not get enough papyrus from Egypt to supply his needs, so he revived the old use of skins for writing upon, which had been discarded. But King Eumenes did more than this, because he caused trials to be made with the inner skins of sheep and calves, treated with lime and rubbed smooth. We get our word parchment from this connexion, but vellum, which is made from calfskin, is a much better material in every way, and all the best illuminated manu-

scripts are done upon it. Parchment is made from sheepskin, and has not the same fine grain as vellum, but it is much used for legal writings, and is only rarely painted upon.

Diptychs were two thin rectangular pieces of wood hinged together at the back either with metal rings or thongs threaded through holes. On the inner sides shallow rectangular hollows were cut and filled with blackened wax. Near the outer edge of one of the leaves, inside, a small trench was usually made to hold the stylus, a small metal or bone rod to write on the wax with: it was pointed at one end and flat like a small spade at the other to flatten out old writing on the wax. In the middle of each inner side a small projecting knob of wood was always left to prevent the wax surfaces from sticking together.

The ordinary small diptychs were usually made of beech, fir, or citron wood, but those made for ceremonial use were of ivory, often beautifully carved. Sometimes they were made with more than two leaves, and in such cases they had special names. In Latin they were called

‘Pugillaria’, because they were small enough to be held in one hand. A diptych is mentioned by Homer as *πιναξ πτυκτος* (Pinax ptuktos), meaning ‘a folded writing tablet’, and by Herodotus as *δελτιον διπτυκον* (Deltion diptukon), meaning ‘a pair of tablets’. Sometimes, when diptychs were sent as letters containing private information, they were tied together at the front edges and sealed.

The earliest Latin writing known is on one of the many small diptychs found at Pompeii in 1875, it records the sale of a slave girl, Umbricia Januaria, and is dated A.D. 55.

Diptychs are always interesting because they combine manuscript and binding in one and the same thing. It is also interesting to note that in the case of ivory diptychs, when the thin black film of wax on the inside was written upon by a sharp-pointed stylus, the writing, penetrating down to the ivory, would show as white on a black ground. The Greek word *λευκογράφειν* (leucographein), meaning ‘to write in white’, may possibly refer to this peculiarity, but it is by no means certain what it really refers to.

Fine ivory diptychs were made in considerable numbers in Rome from about the third to the seventh century, of a rather large size. Many of these are devotional and many official. Those of a religious tendency are, generally, the finest, but the official ones are the most interesting because they show so many details of the costumes and insignia of the consuls by whom they were issued, and also many of the customs and fashions of the Romans of the period.

The consular diptychs were presented by new consuls to their friends in notification of their appointment, and the main motive in the carving is a portrait of the sender. In early times at Rome the consuls were most important officials, and they spared no expense tending to their own glorification. They enlisted the services of skilled Greek artists whenever possible, and some of the finest ivory carvings known can be found on diptychs.

In later times, during the Empire, consuls lost much of their former dignity, but the habit of issuing expensive ivory diptychs, each one unique in design, became so prevalent in the case of any new appointment that in

the fifth century the Emperor Theodosius issued an edict to the effect that only the consul of Rome and the consul of Constantinople were in future to be allowed the privilege of sending out such treasures.

Many of the ivory diptychs were eventually cut up and the pieces used as panels in various ornamental positions. Small ivory plaques inserted on book covers have often been originally parts of diptychs.

Single leaves of diptychs are often found in museums, and this may perhaps mean that the under, or second, leaf, not being finely carved, has been used for some other purpose. But the inscriptions sometimes show that the second leaf, although it may not have been so elaborately carved, at all events had upon it the completion of a sentence or inscription. Even single leaves are now very precious, and consequently they have been largely imitated. The best imitations are admirably carved and right enough in detail, but they generally fail in surface and colour. They are often difficult to detect as frauds.

During the early centuries of the Christian era manuscripts on vellum were written in the Scriptoria of the

various religious houses, particularly those of the Benedictines and the Dominicans. Monastic rules about the Scriptoria were very strict, and no one was allowed inside except the scribes themselves and the higher officials of the monastery. The result of this care can be recognized in the fact that no appearance of haste ever shows in a fine old manuscript, bad writing is unknown, and every portion of the work is evidently done in a true spirit of devotion and with loving care in the smallest detail.

Mediæval monks were indeed enthusiastic about the production of their books, both inside and outside. In the quiet seclusion of the Scriptorium each monk was encouraged to develop his artistic capabilities to their fullest extent. Each worker was allotted the work best suited to his powers: some were writers of the text in clear large black letter, others more skilled designed the ornamental capitals, and to finish the work came the highly skilled gilders, illuminators, and miniature painters.

There were also workshops in which the binding and outside decoration of the books were done. Here were

monk carpenters to cut the thick wooden boards on which the decorative work was to be affixed, goldsmiths, silversmiths, casters, engravers, chasers, repoussé workers, and gilders. There were also enamellers and probably gemcutters, but it is possible that the monks got their gems cut for them, to their specification, by an outside lapidary. The same thing may be said about the few cameos and intaglios which are sometimes inserted in old bindings.

The earliest copies of the Gospels still existing were made from still earlier versions, references to which are found now and then. One of these refers to a Latin version of the second century.

The earliest copies of the Bible that we now know of are written on vellum in Greek, and date from the fourth century. Of or about this date are the *Codex Sinaiticus*, part of which is now at Leipsic and part was at St. Petersburg ; and the *Codex Vaticanus*, at Rome : this is now imperfect. Then of the fifth century are the *Codex Alexandrinus*, given to Charles I by Cyril, Patriarch of Constantinople, and now one of the greatest treasures in the British Museum ; and the *Codex rescriptus Ephraemi*, a frag-

MANUSCRIPTS AND BINDINGS II

ment only, at Paris. Of the sixth century is the *Codex Bezae*, containing chiefly only the Gospels and the Acts, which is now in the Cambridge University Library. They are all written in uncials, what we should call capital letters.

Early classical writings are mostly without any illustrations, but now and then a few unimportant small drawings are introduced. In the Byzantine period, from about the fourth to the tenth or eleventh centuries, the art of producing highly ornamented manuscripts came much into fashion, strongly influenced by Greek artists of eminence who found a more profitable outlook abroad than could be afforded by their own country.

During this period the vellum used for very special works, or intended for presentation to important dignitaries, was often stained purple and the writing done upon it in gold or silver paint, like the gold shell still supplied by our present colour men.

Byzantine influence was very strong in Europe until the twelfth or thirteenth century, when each country gradually threw off the dominance of oriental idealism and

developed its own style. But Byzantine art remains still strong in Russia and in the ceremonials and observances of the Greek Church.

The management of gold leaf in most of these early illuminations is remarkable. The outline of the part to be gilded was marked out and the space carefully filled with some reddish powder so as to be in low relief. On this a small piece of gold leaf, cut as nearly as possible to the required shape, was fixed down, probably with white of egg, and the whole thing, when dry, was burnished with an agate or dog's tooth or some such thing. Finally an edge was painted on so as to cover up any small projections of either the red groundwork or the gold leaf. The brilliancy of much of this old work is most remarkable. It is probable that the gold leaf used was very much thicker than what we have now.

But strong as the influence of Byzantine art was, another almost equally strong school of ornamentation came into being in the seventh and eighth centuries, and that was the Irish school of Celtic art. Although very fine examples of this art are very rare, the influence of

Celtic style was very widely spread indeed, and traces of it continually show in manuscripts written in all parts of Europe for a very long time. Indeed, at one time there actually was a Franco-Saxon school of design in which the familiar primitive style of Irish interlacings shows very clearly.

The Irish missionaries were very zealous Christians, and they migrated much to the Continent, particularly to France, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy, and wherever they went they brought their beautiful art with them. In the monasteries that they founded their principles as to the decoration of their manuscripts, and also of their bindings, were naturally followed.

Irish scroll work seems to have been originally suggested by close observation of ordinary objects that generally pass unnoticed. For instance, the knotting together of strings or ribbons, the twisting and plaiting of threads in textiles, the interlacings which can be followed in baskets, and such-like small matters.

All these are most carefully studied and arranged so as to make an almost bewildering intricacy of ornamentation.

Mixed up and among these elaborate groupings of curves and diapers are figures of men, animals, birds, and uncatalogued creatures, all unhesitatingly cut short or enlarged to the pleasure of the designer so as to properly fill the space he reserves for them. These abnormalities are generally known as 'lacertines', and whatever they may be, together with the interlaced background on which they occur, all are exquisitely drawn and coloured with minute and wonderful skill, spirals, curves, and lozenges.

One peculiarity deserves particular notice, and this appears on the Cathach Psalter of the seventh century, the earliest Irish MS. It consists of a close succession of small red dots all round the main design. Whenever this curious mannerism shows, wherever the manuscript was made, it is sure that an Irish artist had something to do with it.

The Book of Kells, now at Trinity College, Dublin, is a copy of the Gospels in Latin, and it is altogether the finest example left of the seventh-century Irish style of decorated manuscripts known as Hiberno-Celtic. The

figures of the Evangelists are throughout in Celtic style, and the style of the writing used in the text is bold and very fine and easy to read. But in the illuminated pages the lettering is often much involved and difficult to read. It is unfortunately in bad condition, and has been badly used and cropped by some old-time binder, but what still remains is clear evidence of its original paramount position as the leading example of its particular school of art.

The 'Lindisfarne Gospels' is a manuscript which was written at Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, off the coast of Northumberland. It is in Latin, and attributed to the seventh century. In many ways it closely resembles the Book of Kells, but it is in excellent condition: the characters used in the text are fine, but not so fine as those of the Book of Kells. As it was, however, actually written in England, it is dignified by the name of Anglo-Celtic. It has an Anglo-Saxon gloss, which is the earliest known manuscript of the Gospels in English.

It is supposed to have been written by Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne, and it originally had a rich ornamental

binding, which is now gone, but it has been replaced by one which to some extent probably resembles the original.

The ornamentation of the manuscript is remarkable because it shows the influence of both the Byzantine and the Irish, or Celtic, styles. The ornamental interlacings and fanciful scrolls and grotesques are all purely Celtic, but the large full-page portraits of the Evangelists are unmistakably in the Byzantine style of the finest period.

The portrait of St. Luke, which shows his emblem of a calf, with nimbus and wings, is a remarkable testimony to the truth of the legend connecting the writing of the manuscript with Northumberland. The calf is a careful delineation of one of the celebrated white bulls of Chillingham. It has horns of a peculiar shape, and a tuft of reddish-brown hair in the ears, and Lord Tankerville tells me that these same peculiarities are still to be found in the herd of wild white cattle which is still carefully preserved in his domain at Chillingham Castle.

In 875 Danish marauders sacked Lindisfarne, but before it was quite occupied by the invaders the monks

took away much of their treasure to the mainland, especially the great copy of the Gospels. It was deposited in the shrine of St. Cuthbert at Durham, and afterwards became the property of Sir Robert Cotton, whose grandson, Sir John, presented it, with the rest of the Cottonian Library, to the nation in 1700, and it is now in the British Museum.

A copy of the Gospels was presented to Theodelenda, Queen of the Lombards, by Pope Gregory the Great: it was contained in a beautiful golden box. In a letter from him it is mentioned as ‘*Lectionam S. Evang., Theca Persica inclusam*’. Queen Theodelenda afterwards founded a church at Monza and added an inscription on the outside of the box saying that she presented it to her church.

The cover is splendidly jewelled with hundreds of small flat garnets in borders and edges, other gems, and cameos: it is all work of about the seventh century.

An exactly similar way of preserving a precious manuscript found favour in Ireland in and about the eleventh century, and the highly decorative boxes in which the treasures were kept are called *Cumdachs*.

On some of the Irish cumdachs remarkable art work and design can be seen, but in most cases they are in bad condition, and much of the ornamental work has disappeared. The cover of the 'Stowe Missal' is one of the best preserved, and it derives its name from the fact that it once belonged to the Duke of Buckingham at Stowe and was kept there with other treasures for a long time. It is now in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy at Dublin.

The upper surface of the Stowe Cumdach (Plate VII) is set with a decorative cross, jewelled and enamelled. The large stone in the centre is a crystal. In the four quarters of the cross are silver plates engraved with figures of the Crucifixion, the Virgin and Child, a female figure probably representing Mary Magdalen, and a Bishop in the attitude of Benediction. The border is covered with silver plates on which is an inscription in Irish which says, 'Pray for the soul of Dunchad descendant of Taccan of the family of Cluan who made this.' The sides of the cumdach are remarkable for small castings with open work in silver, set on a background of gilt bronze. The

under side is ornamented in much the same way as the upper side, but not so elaborated.

The same peculiar open work in silver set on a gilt base occurs again on the cumdach which contains the Molaise Gospels. It is overlaid with bronze plates with silver and silver-gilt ornamentation upon them, but much of the old work is gone. The design is a cross, with gems and delicate gold wirework. In the four quarters are the emblems of the Evangelists. On the under side is an inscription in Irish which says, 'Pray for Cenn, the successor of Molaise for whom this case was made by Gillabraithin the artisan.' It is now in the museum of the Royal Academy at Dublin.

Dimma's Book, a manuscript of the twelfth century, is now in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. The cumdach in which it is kept is ornamented with a silver cross set with jewels, the quarters being filled with metal plaques worked with Celtic interlacings with lacertine forms. This resembles, in a small degree, the plan of decoration used in the older side of the binding of the Gospels of Lindau, which is considered to be of Irish workmanship.

Under the name of 'Capsa' cumdachs are well known on the Continent, and they are often richly ornamented.

Alcuin of York, a great English scholar and theologian who lived in the eighth century, was markedly instrumental in spreading appreciation of the Northumbrian or Anglo-Celtic school of writing and illumination on the Continent.

The Emperor Charlemagne had much love for beautiful things, and among his other researches he realized that in the production of books, both as to writing as well as to illumination, there was much room for improvement. His Court was at Aix-la-Chapelle, and here he collected together works of art from several other places, among them Ravenna and Rome, to beautify his palace. The Emperor's desire for a more careful consideration as concerned art productions of all kinds, which he considered were then in a bad way, became important enough to cause the subsequent improvement in all ways, but especially as concerned books, to be known as the Carolingian Renaissance.

In furtherance of these ambitious views the Emperor was eagerly on the look-out for anyone who appeared capable of assisting him, and when he came across the Englishman Alcuin at Parma he at once recognized that here was a man after his own heart, so he invited him to return with the royal party to Aix, where in time Alcuin became a court official of much importance.

When Alcuin retired from active life at the Court of Aix-la-Chapelle, he was made Abbot of St. Martin's at Tours, and founded there the Tours school of writing and illumination, which was partly classical and partly Celtic. Under his successors this school maintained a position of much importance for a long time, but the Celtic element of design gradually gave way to newer styles.

The rich covers in which early Christian writings were sometimes kept show Byzantine styles of art very markedly. Indeed, many of them were made in other countries and, like several manuscripts in a similar position, were never near Byzantium at all.

The beautiful covers are properly only finely orna-

mented on the upper side, the under side being kept comparatively plain. They were used as altar books, and as they are almost always bound in heavy wooden boards they were not likely to be moved much, although some of them are said to have been used in the place of a pax, and carried round to receive the kiss of peace from the congregation.

Sometimes, however, rich bindings occur on both sides of an old binding, as shown in the case of the Gospels of Lindau (Plate VIII). In such instances one of the sides has been taken from an earlier book and added to the existing one.

The main motive found on these early bindings is usually either a figure of Christ or a Cross. On copies of the Gospels the emblems of the Four Evangelists commonly occur, mostly as corner ornaments, for which use they are admirably suited. They lend themselves to decorative treatment in all sorts of ways, from the quaint Celtic figures on the cumdach of the Gospels of Molaise to the grouping on the corners of the earlier side of the binding of the Gospels of Lindau (Plate VIII).

In the first chapter of Ezekiel, describing his vision, he says : ‘ A whirlwind came out of the north . . . also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures . . . and every one had four faces and every one had four wings . . . and they had the hands of a man under their wings . . . they four had the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right side ; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side ; they four also had the face of an eagle.’

In the Revelation of St. John, in chapter four, he says that round about the throne of heaven ‘ were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle’.

There are various interpretations of these emblems which are traditionally associated with particular Evangelists, and their use indicates the point of view from which the life of Christ is considered in each of the Gospels.

St. Matthew is considered to have dealt particularly with the manhood of Christ, so his emblem is a man or

an angel ; St. Mark realizes the royalty of Christ, and has the lion for his emblem ; St. Luke deals with the dignity of Christ as a Priest and as a Teacher, and takes the calf or the ox as his emblem ; and St. John treats of the spiritual dignity of Christ, and has an eagle as his emblem. In the Lindisfarne Gospels these attributions are definitely shown and described, and although the emblems have now and then been differently assigned, the Lindisfarne authority of the seventh century has been generally adhered to. The names of the Evangelists have in all cases been added to their portraits, and above them in each instance the corresponding emblem is figured and its name added as well.

St. Matthew has above him a winged man with a nimbus and holding a trumpet, lettered 'Imago Hominis' ; St. Mark has above him a winged lion with nimbus, holding a trumpet in its mouth, lettered 'Imago Leonis' ; St. Luke has a white calf, winged, with nimbus, holding a book, lettered 'Imago Vituli' ; and St. John has a flying eagle, with nimbus, holding a book, lettered 'Imago Aquilae'.

A nimbus round the head of any figure is an ancient

way of indicating light or glory belonging to a god or a great ruler. An aureole, which encloses the whole body, has the same meaning, but shown in a more extended form.

A nimbus is usually round, but it varies sometimes, and instances occur in which it is shown cruciform, and even triangular or square. The colour varies : gold, silver, red, green, or even black, are found in manuscripts. On bindings the colours are given by vitreous enamels, or rarely by jewels. The cruciferous nimbus often shown round the head of Christ shows the upper part of a cross within the circle.

Beautiful outline illustrations were often made on English manuscripts during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These drawings have remarkable charm, and they show great skill both in design and in draughtsmanship, the treatment of drapery is admirable in all of them, and it must have been most carefully studied. The best of these drawings were made either at Winchester, always the home of beautiful books, or at Canterbury. Gothic feeling in illuminated manuscripts here began to show about this time.

The finest period of the production of illuminated manuscripts in England may be considered to have been reached in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, round about A.D. 1300. In this work Winchester again almost leads the way, but is closely followed by beautiful work done at Durham and at Westminster. But so many fine examples were made in many of our art centres that it is difficult to award the palm to any one place of origin. Each piece is unique in itself and is an honour to the place where it was made.

Late in the fourteenth century, in one of the missals probably made for Richard II, occurs a remarkable and beautiful way of ornamenting a plain gold background. It consists of designing a series of curves and arabesques on the flat gold by means of small dots carefully impressed by a small round pointed stylus, probably of agate. Each of the minute dots is polished and reflects a brilliant point of light. When a side light falls upon one of the backgrounds ornamented in this way the design shows as if drawn in golden light by a fairy pencil.

When printing was introduced into Europe in the

fifteenth century it rapidly superseded books written by hand. Instead of clear writing in large pages of vellum, adorned with beautiful miniatures, we find small books printed in small type on white paper, both of which peculiarities have done their best for a long time to ruin our eyesight.

In 1872 William Morris tried his hand at producing an illuminated transcript of the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám. It is a very small book and most dainty: the figures are done by Fairfax Murray from designs by Morris and Sir E. Burne-Jones. It is now in the British Museum.

A large number of beautiful illuminated manuscripts were made in France, and in the thirteenth century particularly French work held a very prominent position in the art. At Rheims and Paris particularly fine work was done both in the thirteenth and fourteenth century. There are two small particulars of illumination that are found to be characteristic of French origin: one is the use of a scroll of ivy-leaf pattern, often set on an ornamental bar, and the other is a small diaper background behind some of the miniatures, sometimes set square

and sometimes set corner-wise, and always brightly coloured.

Gothic art appears with welcome beauty in Books of Hours particularly, in later French art.

Many names of French miniaturists who worked on French manuscripts are known, one of the most highly esteemed is that of Jean Fouquet, a native of Tours, who was educated as an artist, and in 1445 at Rome he painted a portrait of Pope Eugenius IV. On his return to France with a high reputation he quickly became a fashionable painter, and was made 'Peintre du Roy'. He made a portrait of the French king on vellum, and added miniatures to many important manuscripts.

His most important pieces of work are in a translation of Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews*, in which eleven paintings are stated to be by 'Jehan Foucquet, natif de Tours'. The existence of these authenticated miniatures gives critics a valuable standpoint for further identification of Fouquet's work, which is always beautiful and imaginative, but in books they are really pictures inserted on their own account, and no longer exemplify and belong

to the text in the same intimate way that the earlier illuminations, made in any country, always did. Fouquet had many imitators, and his influence lasted for a long time.

In Italy on the decline of the Byzantine influence fine illuminations showing distinctive tendencies were done in the fourteenth century, but the best work appears in the next century, when Fra Angelico is supposed to have worked at illuminated manuscripts. Nothing, however, is signed, but there is a considerable amount of miniature work in books that strongly resembles his style. There are two detail mannerisms in Italian books the existence of which is supposed to show their origin. The most obvious of these can be found in the rather broad borders that often enclose the text: it is a graceful white vine stem with stalks closely intertwined, filled in with small figures of boys, birds, and animals. The other Italian mark of origin is a small coloured circle closely rayed all round with fine rays, at the ends of some of which are small dots.

There is one remarkable Italian manuscript that

deserves particular mention, and that is the Bible of Borso d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, in the fifteenth century. It is in two volumes, and is illustrated with over a thousand miniatures, some of which were painted by Taddeo Crivelli, a celebrated artist. It was finished in 1462, and is considered to be the finest example known of Italian illumination. In 1923 it was given to the king of Italy, for the nation, by Commendatore Giovanni Treccani, who had paid a very large sum for it, equivalent in our money to about forty-six thousand five hundred pounds, the largest sum yet paid for any book.

Giulio Clovio was a notable Italian miniaturist of the sixteenth century. He worked for Cardinal Grimani, and all his paintings are marked by an unusually free use of gold paint, our gold shell. Clovio's work is of fine draughtsmanship and design, and is now highly esteemed.

Although many Flemish illuminators went abroad to help other nations, especially France, they nevertheless left enough clever artists at home to create a national style of their own. They readily followed the lead of Jean Fouquet, and illustrated their manuscripts with a

series of miniatures rather than in the older way of adding small paintings and scrolls making almost a part of the text itself.

Broad borders were always much favoured in Flemish illuminated manuscripts, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries these borders were thickly covered with delicately painted flowers, birds, and insects, all strongly shadowed so as to appear in high relief. A quite small panel is left for the text, which has its own ornamental initial letter, and often a miniature decoration as well.

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CHAPTER II

PRINTED BOOKS

THE ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans all used name stamps on bricks, lamps, and vases, always impressed while the clay was soft. The stamps were usually cut in metal, but some of the smaller ones may have been equally well cut in wood. Single letters do not seem to have been used.

But the Assyrian tablets and cylinders bearing cuneiform inscriptions upon them, many of which have been found at Babylon and at Nineveh, were very likely impressed or printed by single letters, one at a time. The letter in cuneiform writing is shaped like a wedge, quite small, and the words are made up by several impressions from the same stamp held in different positions and arranged in different groupings. In fact, there is only

one form of letter at all, but of course there may be, and are, several sizes of it.

Many years ago George Smith, of the British Museum, went out to Babylon and Nineveh and the neighbourhood and found numbers of small tablets of baked clay covered with cuneiform inscriptions. Some of these he deciphered, and among them he found one on which there was a record of the Flood, the earliest account of it known. Smith was, I believe, the first antiquary who succeeded in interpreting cuneiform inscriptions.

The Chinese made types of porcelain, lead, or wood at a very early date, and so did the Japanese and Coreans, but their alphabets were so extensive and complicated that printing was never used to any great extent. They also made block books of wood both in China and Tibet, and it is quite possible that some traveller from these regions brought back specimens and information that started the idea of printing in Europe.

It is remarkable that there seems to have been little or no experimental work in printing ever done in this part of the world, as the Mazarine Bible, the first book

printed in Europe, is an extremely fine and finished example of typography, and so are many others among the earliest printed books.

Printing from movable types in Europe was first used for Papal Indulgences, and of these the earliest dated example was printed on 15 November 1454. Shortly after this, in 1456, a German printer, Johann Gutenberg, at Mainz, printed and issued a splendid copy of the Bible, known as the forty-two line, or Mazarine Bible. Both in this magnificent book and in another he printed in 1461 similar types to those used in the earlier Indulgences appear. Gutenberg worked with Peter Schoeffer and Johann Fust.

The manuscripts which provided the models for the production of printed books, and which the early types copied very closely, usually had richly ornamented capital letters, and these decorative accessories did not by any means escape the careful notice of the early printers. So we often find richly engraved and coloured capitals in early printed books, generally red and blue. In the Latin Psalter printed at Mainz in 1457 by Johann Fust

and Peter Schoeffer, himself an illuminator, an extremely fine example of one of these coloured capital letters can be studied. (Plate I.)

There has been much discussion and difference of opinion among experts as to the method by which these large coloured letters were produced. The probability is that the space for the capital letter was left blank when the type was printed, and that the coloured impressions were made afterwards by hand from wood blocks.

Then comes the trouble of the second colour, and it seems likely that the outer part of the design was cut on the wood, leaving a clear space of the same outline as was designed for the inner part. Supposing the outer part was inked with blue and printed, by hand pressure, in its proper place, then when the blue ink was dry the second or inner part would be inked with red and its impression carefully fitted into the space left for it.

On the other hand, it is sometimes considered that the whole letter has been cut on one piece of wood and part of it inked with one colour and part of it with another colour. It seems to me that in such a case it would have



B illo tempore. Beati
 tentibus undecim disci-
 pulis apparuit illis do-
 minus ihesus et exprobrauit

Comit l'ame marce l'apre l'angle et a figure d'un pout. Comit l'ame pout le huyse comit il se n'adex le pout a l'ain q'l
 ne fut fait eueq mas n'obste il fu taur enesq. comit il guera bng de m'ade comit on l'ue vne corde au col. puis fu t

The Initial Letter B in the Mainz Psalter of 1457

PLATE I

THE MAINZ PSALTER OF 1457

(Actual size)

This Psalter is the first book in which the place of printing, the date, and the Printers' names appear. This information is given on the last leaf, printed in red ink. The Printers were Johann Fust of the city of Mainz and Peter Schoffer of Gernszheim, and the date 1457. The note also draws attention to the fact that printing can be used to produce books without the use of a pen.

The plate shows the splendid red and blue initial letter of BEATUS in the first Psalm. This letter was probably cut on two wood blocks, one fitting inside the other, and carefully printed by hand when inked in the desired colours. Much of the accessory scroll work has probably been added by hand. It is altogether a magnificent specimen of early typography.

A large red and blue capital, as well as small red capitals, had already been successfully used by Gutenberg and Fust in the case of the forty-two line Bible printed by them a few years earlier, but in that case the coloured work proved so troublesome to manage that it was only used at the beginning of the book.

The copy from which this plate has been made is now in the British Museum.

been very difficult to keep the two inks from mixing a little at their contiguous edges, and no such mixing ever shows, as far as I have seen.

The two-block principle, although it must have been very troublesome and slow to do, is, I believe, the true solution. Any points which failed to print properly were painted in by hand, and in many cases accessory curves and flourishes have been added by hand.

Only a very slight pressure is needed to make an impression from an engraved wood block on good paper, and it would have been very difficult to have printed these letters concurrently with the black type. They must have been independently done, and have taken a long time to do, and also no two copies can be exactly the same. The printers must have taken the greatest pride in these coloured capitals as those that exist are all extremely well done, and there must have been many failures, all of which were done away with.

During the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries large numbers of books were printed in Germany, one of the best known is the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, printed by Anton

Koburger, and profusely illustrated with woodcuts. The types used show a general tendency to become smaller.

German binders were fond of using pigskin, which is usually stamped in blind, without gold, but often colour is painted on the blind impressions by hand, and names or lettering is sometimes painted with gold paint; dates are also sometimes given.

Calf bindings of German make are often decoratively cut superficially by hand. This cut-leather work is a marked characteristic of German origin, and it is frequently stained in places, usually in black, which has a good effect on the dark-brown leather. True cut work of this kind can only be done by a very skilled artist, so it was found worth while to engrave metal plates in such a way that they would make an impression on softened calf that closely imitates the true cut work. But there is a test which can easily be considered in any doubtful case. In all the best examples of true cut-leather work on books there will be found a very effective use of slight undercutting in places. Each of these small under-cuttings gives when finished, the effect of a little black

space, and in the case of an imitation made by a stamp, these little black points are wanting. Any real cut-leather binding is unique, but an imitation can be repeated a number of times, or even cut down to fit smaller books.

German printers emigrated freely into other countries, and in Italy they found a ready welcome and an appreciative public. At Subiaco, Conrad Sweynheim and Arnold Pannartz printed books as early as 1465, and soon after that they and other Germans went and worked at Rome, Verona, Florence, Naples, and Venice, teaching the ready Italians the new art, in which they quickly became proficient.

At Venice, in 1499, Aldus Manutius printed the delightful *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, illustrated with extremely delicate woodcuts in outline. In their way these woodcuts have never been excelled in beauty.

In early days Venice had a large trade with the East, and among the various objects that reached there were often leather horse trappings. Horse trappings have for a very long time been favourite objects for decoration, and the Arabs, and other nations fond of horses, made

their saddles and bridles and other things as rich and beautiful as they possibly could.

Among the curious pieces of ornamentation on leather from the East, Venetian leather workers found a considerable use made of small rings and dots, which were gilded with pieces of thin gold strongly pressed on. This no doubt appealed strongly to the very artistic Italians, and the clever leather workers set themselves the task of finding out how best to apply the gilding to bookbindings.

After, no doubt, considerable experimentation, the Venetians hit upon the utilization of the well-known fact that white of egg became hardened by heat, to the fixing of gold leaf on leather. This was most likely done at first by smearing a space on the leather with white of egg and then laying a piece of gold leaf upon it and ironing it with a hot iron. Spaces of considerable size gilded in this way occur on several early Venetian bindings, but they quickly found out the further principle of using small metal stamps, properly heated, to fix the gold leaf on to the leather in small patterns. So gold tooling had its rise in Venice, and Italian professors of

the art carried it in time to other nations, one of them coming to England and teaching our Thomas Berthelet.

Italian binders at an early date showed several stamps with designs in relief, cameos in leather, and these were sometimes coloured. Whether these cameo stamps were always made for use on books is doubtful, some of them seem to have been also used for ornamentation of sword-handles and such-like objects. In the case of such stamps cut for use on leather they would only need to have been cut as hollows, because the natural resilience of the leather would itself give the properly rounded relief.

Until the sixteenth century Italian gold-tooled bindings are of the first excellence, after that they fell off curiously, but good work can always be found in the rich series of bindings that were made for Popes and Cardinals.

Papal bindings can be safely recognized by the appearance of the Papal Tiara and the Cross Keys. (Plate XVIII.) Bindings made for Cardinals always have above the coat of arms a Cardinal's hat from which, on each side, depends a group of fifteen tassels, starting

with one and increasing by one tassel at each step until the fifteen are complete. An Abbot wears three tassels on each side, a Bishop six, an Archbishop ten, the hat being the same shape in all cases, but in actual use the colour is different for each grade.

Germans were the pioneers of printing in France, and numbers of them migrated there in the late fifteenth century, and presses were rapidly installed at the Sorbonne, Paris, Lyons, and other important centres. The first printed book was issued at the Sorbonne in 1470, it was the *Epistolae of Gasparinus Barzizius*, and printed by Germans, Ulrich Gering, Michael Friburger, and Martin Kranz.

From 1485 onwards, Antoine Verard published several books in Paris: they are mostly large books and very fully illustrated. But Verard was curiously unscrupulous with regard to the woodcuts which are so plentiful in his books. He acquired any old blocks he fancied, and if in any small details they did not quite meet his requirements he had them coloured by hand with opaque water-colours until they passed muster. In many cases if

illustrations in Verard's books are held up to the light the original woodcut design will show clearly through the superimposed colour.

In one of the volumes which belonged to Henry VII of England, most of whose library consisted of books published by Verard, there is a view of the Red Sea, which may represent any sea, but it is duly fitted for its present position by being painted bright red. Henry VII's library, most of which is now in the British Museum, only consisted of a few fine books, which are now rebound in velvet, mostly red, and it seems probable that they were originally bound in that material, as some are that still remain in their original covering.

One of the best Paris printers in the fifteenth century was Jean Du Pré, and in one of his books he says of his vignettes that they are '*imprimés en cuyere*', but they are not really likely to have been cut on copper, as it is too hard to cut comfortably in the manner of a woodcut. But this can be very easily and effectively done on some softer metal, such as pewter. Metal cuts show a remarkable delicacy of workmanship, more so indeed than

could be done on any wood but box wood, the use of which is practically modern.

From 1491 until about 1501 Philippe Pigouchet printed a number of Books of Hours that were illustrated with very delicate and beautiful metal-cuts done in the way introduced by Du Pré. But Pigouchet realized the illustrative effect of the process more successfully than any of his predecessors had done. His pages look like fine illuminated manuscript pages, only in black. His exquisite designs and borders engraved in this way are unequalled. The backgrounds have a small peculiarity which may be useful in judging whether a print is a metal-cut, and that is that the backgrounds, black, are often closely dotted over with small white dots. Obviously on a metal plate this would be very easy to do, but on a wood block it would be much more troublesome to do so as to make a clear impression.

Vellum pages removed from Pigouchet's books are often found skilfully coloured by hand. They look very well indeed, and readily sell as pages retrieved from an old illuminated manuscript.

In France the whole art of book production was much fostered by the Guild of St. Jean Latran, founded in 1401 and lasting until 1791. They seem, however, to have paid more attention to bookbinding than to typography, and the result was that in France whole families of binders, working from father to son for several generations, are recorded. Several of these families developed some especial style by which their work may be recognized, and as might be expected, in each great family one member has made himself pre-eminent. Many of the French binders fortunately signed their work. A distinction was made in the Guild between the Binders and the Gilders of bindings, so that double names are often found on fine books. In such cases the first name is that of the binder and the second name that of the gilder. This explains the existence of such signatures as Trautz-Bauzonnet, Marius-Michel, and Chambolle-Duru.

In the seventeenth century a mysterious binder known as 'Le Gascon' invented a new gilding device which almost at once became so popular, and almost universal,

that it has been continuously used ever since. He did not invent any new style, but only a change in the cutting of the gilding tools.

Binders' gilding tools are usually cut on brass, and set on long wooden handles. The curves and ornaments cut on these stamps, which are mostly small, are cut so as to show a clear continuous surface. What Le Gascon did was to score his stamps across with fine lines cut close together, with the result that when used in the ordinary way on a binding, instead of showing as a curve or line in continuous sequence, it showed as a series of small dots. The brilliant and sparkling effect of this invention at once appealed to all book-finishers, and it has made the name of Le Gascon well known to all book-lovers, and if anyone is fortunate enough to possess one of his bindings, which are mostly quite small, he has much to be proud of. (Plate XVII.)

There have been many attempts to find out who Le Gascon really was, but so far it remains unknown. Some authorities think he was Jean Gillède.

Among the French binders who succeeded in evolving

distinctive styles of their own may be mentioned, first, Nicolas Eve, who invented the highly decorative style of gold tooling known now as the 'Fanfare' style. It is known by this name because at a much later time, in 1825, it was very effectively used for the binding of a book called *Les Fanfares et Couvées Abbadesques*. Both Nicolas and Clovis Eve, his successor, worked in the sixteenth century. (Plate XII.)

An oval space was left in the centre of Nicolas Eve's beautiful bindings so that an owner could have his arms or device added to the book. But this was not always done by the first purchaser, and in many instances coats of arms were added by owners long after Eve's time, and often enough they do not fit properly. Several books were bound in this style for J. A. De Thou, the historian, with his coat of arms in the centre.

In the early eighteenth century Antoine Michel Padeloup, called Le Jeune, proved himself to be the best designer of his numerous family. Before him another well-known French binder, Luc Antoine Boyet, had produced some very effective decoration by means of a

lace-like delicate ornamentation repeated along the inner edges of the boards of a binding. Padeloup saw the value of this idea and he cleverly amplified it and designed broad ornamental edges and borders with floral sprays, curves, and arabesques, closely interlaced. These are known generically as Dentelle bindings, and the style dominated the French bindings during the eighteenth century. Padeloup also introduced the fashion of mosaic book-decoration in which mostly floral designs are inlaid with thin pieces of coloured leather and finished with fine gold tooling. The style was very popular for small books and many French binders used it, especially those belonging to the family of Lemonnier.

At a little later period Nicolas Denis Derome, whose reputation is marred by various reports as to cropping and sawing the back of books, nevertheless succeeded in adopting and modifying Padeloup's dentelles so as to have deserved the distinction of a new name. Derome's dentelles were not of so delicate a character as Padeloup's, but rather resemble the curves of small ironwork. Among the curves Derome introduced a small bird, and these

bindings are known as 'Dentelles à l'oiseau'. He also bound several decorative volumes in a manner suggested by the work of an English binder, James Edwards of Halifax. Derome's bindings in this style are carried out in gold tooling and they look extremely well, better and stronger indeed than the originals which are in colour, painted under transparent vellum. It is curious that the only English binder who has been at all copied in France is one that has never been much thought of here, although his curious workmanship is of much interest.

It is not definitely known when printing began in the Netherlands, but many authorities claim a very early date. There exist several fragments of printing some of the types of which appear to have been roughly made of wood, and others badly cut in metal. These badly printed pieces are known as Costeriana, because they may have been produced by Lourens Janszoon Coster, who lived at Haarlem about 1440. He is recorded as having cut letters from beech bark, and after inking them used them as stamps.

After these preliminary experiments Coster is credited

with having cut letters much better and printed pages with them. In a short time he found his new process so popular that he had to get an assistant, and his name is said to have been John Faust. This name is almost the same as Johann Fust who afterwards worked with Johann Gutenberg at Mainz. The arguments in favour of Coster having invented printing in Europe will be found in J. H. Hessel's book entitled *Haarlem, the Birth-place of Printing*, printed in London in 1887.

There is a considerable amount of literature about this interesting point, but the best informed critics of to-day doubt the truth of the Coster legend entirely. At the same time it remains a curious puzzle that the forty-two line Bible, the first book printed by Gutenberg and Fust, is technically a perfectly finished piece of work showing no signs whatever of experimental workmanship. Somehow or other innumerable trial pieces that must have been made for a considerable time seem to have entirely disappeared.

Among the many fine books printed in the Netherlands one of the finest is an edition of Boccaccio, printed

at Bruges in 1476 by Colard Mansion, who worked with William Caxton. The types used in this book are very good, large and clear to read: they are said to have been designed by Mansion himself, and he was a noted calligrapher before he took to printing. In almost all later cases the types are all cut on too small a scale, and it is a comfort to come across a book like Mansion's Boccaccio that is easy to read.

Netherlandish bindings are distinguished by the use of finely cut large panel stamps, a style that was largely copied in England, France, and Germany.

In Spain most of the printing was done by foreigners, and they loyally borrowed their ideas of types from the prevalent dignified Spanish handwriting. So Spanish books are often comfortable to read. A notable instance of this clear printing can be found in the case of the *Doctrinal de los Caballeros* of Friedrich Biel, printed at Burgos in 1487, but it is by no means so good as the work done by Colard Mansion.

William Caxton was a native of Kent, but did not live much in England until he was nearly sixty years of

age. In 1468 he lived at Bruges, where he made himself very useful to the many English who settled there, and he officially held the position of 'Governor to the English Merchants at Bruges'. In 1471 he visited Cologne, where he learnt printing and became a friend of Colard Mansion. These two friends presently went back to Bruges, where they set up a printing press, and in 1475-6 they printed several books. Shortly afterwards Caxton returned to England and set up as a printer in the Sanctuary at Westminster under the sign of the Red Pale. The first book he printed here was *The Dictys and Sayengis of the Philosophres*, in 1477. It is in a bold black-letter type and clear to read. The woodcuts that are plentifully found in Caxton's books, and other English books of his time and some time afterwards, are poor both in design and in execution.

The *Book of St. Albans*, printed in 1486, is supposed to have been written by Dame Juliana Barnes. It is of great interest because the part about coat armour shows the coats of arms in colour. They are woodcuts and the colour is not very bright, and they were probably done

in the same way as Edmund Evans did his colour-printed woodcuts at a much later time.

Printing quickly became common in England, and several well-known printers took readily to the new art: Wynkyn de Worde, Julian Notary, Richard Pynson, Thomas Berthelet and John Day are among the best known. After this early period came an influx of poor typography, among which, however, the first edition of the Authorized Version of the Bible stands out as very fine both in type and in illustration. It was issued in 1611.

The bindings of the books of the early printers were usually in dark brown calf or sheepskin. If ornamented at all they were impressed with small stamps in blind or large panel stamps, the use of which was started in the Netherlands.

English bindings ornamented with panel stamps are of much interest: they were mostly made in London, and many are armorial. Several were issued by the Company of Stationers of London, others show designs of St. George and the Dragon, and many of them are well designed and cut, several showing the publishers' or

engravers' initials. Those bound in calf leather have lasted well, but those in sheepskin are generally badly worn, especially where the relief is highest.

The introduction of printing into England very soon had the effect of making books smaller and uglier than the manuscripts had been. The general level of book production here has been low in artistic merit ever since, although we have been fortunate enough to have produced a few great printers and a few great binders.

Thomas Berthelet was 'Royal Printer' and 'Royal Bookbinder' to Henry VIII, and about the middle of the sixteenth century an Italian bookbinder came over here and taught the Royal Bookbinder how to manage the new art of gold tooling on leather. The first book so ornamented in England was a copy of Elyot's *Image of Governance*, published in London in 1541, and bound and gold tooled by Berthelet in an entirely Italian style.

In due time Berthelet developed a stronger and more English feeling in his designs, and he bound several fine gold tooled books for Henry VIII and Edward VI that are dignified and original. (Plate X.)

Many of Berthelet's bindings have also some words written on the edges of the pages in gold: the words are REX IN ÆTERNUM VIVE NEZ. What NEZ stands for is uncertain, but it is supposed to refer to Nebuchadnezzar. The same words occur on some books that were bound for Henry VIII in velvet and in satin and their existence goes to prove that Berthelet bound them.

Berthelet's bindings are sometimes dated, they are generally in calf or vellum, and now and then have very effective black fillets.

The Company of Stationers of London was incorporated by Queen Mary in 1556, in order to control the liberty of the Press, which at that time had become a great trouble to the State because of its interference in matters of politics and religion. The Company had power granted to them to search any unlicensed printing establishments that they could find, and confiscate all documents that were of a mischievous nature. The privilege of being able to charge heavy fees for granting licences was also granted to the Company, so that in a short time they became a very rich as well as a very

powerful body. James I gave the Company the sole right of publishing almanacks.

John Milton did not at all like the authority vested in the Company of Stationers, who objected strongly to something he had written about divorce, and he wrote his *Areopagitica* . . . *for the liberty of unlicensed printing* against them.

Samuel Mearne, who was by Royal Grant made Royal Bookbinder to Charles II in 1660, was specially selected by the King to assist the Company of Stationers to find and abolish the illegal presses. On 27 May 1668, the King sent a special message to the Stationers Company that they should admit Mearne as a member, and eleven years after this, in 1678, he was elected Master. He died in 1683.

Mearne was a great bookbinder, and invented a new basic style of gold tool decoration. The essential point in this new style was to alter the simple line running parallel to the edges of the boards of a book and draw them outwards in the form of a gable. This was done mostly at the top and bottom of the design, but in the

more elaborate examples it is also done at the sides. The motive is one that lends itself easily to much elaboration, and in some form or other it has been largely used on English books from Mearne's time to the present day.

In the many official notices of books bound for Charles II by Mearne notice is often made that a book has been bound 'Rubro corrio Turci', and this refers to red morocco leather that was introduced here by him. He also used it coloured black, but it was never grained.

Mearne also bound several highly ornamental books in colour, black and silver and red, in a repeating design of curves and conventional flowers. These also were very popular, and indeed Mearne's designs may be said to have influenced all the best binding work done in England after his time until the arrival of Roger Payne in the eighteenth century.

Several of Mearne's books have the front edges painted in a curious way, some of them signed 'Fletcher'. The book has to be widely opened before the painting shows, and when the book is shut it does not show at all. This

curious way of ornamenting a book was afterwards used to a small extent by other binders, particularly by James Edwards of Halifax. In some cases the edges are gilt, in the usual way, and the painting is practically unsuspected until the book is opened, but when there is no gilding some sign of marking can usually be seen.

Mearne owed something to Le Gascon, and used the pointillé manner invented by him with much success; he also borrowed the idea of massed gold work, done with small stamps, with admirable effect.

Late in the seventeenth century a leather merchant and shoemaker named John Bagford, a man of much literary and artistic curiosity, lived here. He became an assiduous collector of poems and broadsides, many of which are now only represented in his scrap-books, which are bound in sixty-four volumes in the British Museum. He collected the *Bagford Ballads*, which were published by the Ballad Society, and edited by the Rev. J. W. Ebsworth. Bagford was also a printer, and in his late years he was a Brother of the Charterhouse, where he died in 1716.

Bagford's scrap-books are most interesting, and

although he certainly tore out leaves and parts that he liked from books, still in many cases the rest of the book is entirely gone and only Bagford's bits remain.

There are fragments of printing of all kinds, printers' marks, maps, and title-pages, both English and foreign. There are specimens of bindings, watermarks, and biographical items. Many of the most valuable of the scraps have now been separately catalogued.

Among the papers are two about binding, the first is called 'Of Booke Binding Ancient', and the other 'Of Booke Binding Modourne', and these two essays are the earliest known English accounts of binding.

In the second of these papers mention is made of Mr. Suckerman, 'One of the best workmen that ever took tool in hand, and commonly worked for Mr. Morne [i.e. Merne], the binder to King Charles II and James II . . . Natt. Talnam, Richard Balley, bred under the tuition of Mr. Suckerman at Mr. Merne's'.

So that Mearne was well esteemed in his own time, and one specimen of his gold tooling is preserved in the scrap-book that mentions him.

Many of Mearne's large books are described as having broad ribbon ties with gold-fringed ends, but these have only left marks that show where they once existed.

Some few bindings in red morocco were made for Charles I, and these were very likely bound by Mearne. They show only a large royal coat of arms on the sides which any binder may have used, but the panels at the back show some very delicate gold tooling much in the style Mearne developed at a later period. The same stamp of the royal coat of arms appears later on the binding of a Bible of 1660 that was bound by Mearne for Charles II and shows a stamp of a dove with an olive branch, returning to the ark. Typical no doubt of the Restoration, but probably the only instance in which Charles II is represented by a dove.

In the eighteenth century William Caslon printed an edition of the works of Selden, which is considered to mark the highest level of type-founding of the time. It was published in 1725. Caslon's types are the finest ever designed in England.

Later in the same century John Baskerville printed

an edition of Virgil which drew much attention to his types. It was published at Birmingham in 1757. Baskerville's types were much influenced by the mannerisms which can be found in the many small books which were engraved throughout at the same period of time. The best known of these engravers were John Clark and John Pine, and Baskerville followed their principle of the use of thin upstrokes and thick downstrokes rather too closely. But his types are clear and graceful, and he has many admirers.

Believing that older types were better than new ones, Charles Whittingham the younger designed a much broader type than usual and took Caslon as his model. He printed the diary of Lady Willoughby in his new type in 1844, and it was much admired. The Chiswick Press has a long and important place in the history of printing in England. There also the old fashion of using ornamental woodcut initials was to some extent revived.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century one of our greatest binders began to work here. Roger Payne was a man of low origin, but an undoubted genius as a

decorative artist in the matter of gold tooling on leather. He designed, and probably cut, his own gilding tools.

Payne usually left a considerable field of leather plain on his bindings. He never invented a new form of design as Mearne did, but he specialized in the use of highly decorative lines made up by successive impressions, end to end, of some small stamp apparently designed for such a use. He also studied the decoration of corner pieces very markedly.

Mearne introduced a new leather, but Payne discovered a way of making the same leather assume a more ornamental appearance. Payne's invention may very well have been suggested accidentally, for if he had happened to roll up a piece of morocco rather tightly and leave it in a damp corner for some time, when he opened it he would have found curious small ridges across the surface of the leather, and these ridges would remain if not ironed out. Some such chance as this showed Payne that damp morocco tightly rolled up would assume a straight irregular grain, and he liked it very much, so that many of his finest bindings are bound in leather treated in this way.

Now another grain is more usually given to morocco : it is produced by rolling a piece of ' straight-grain ' leather again at right angles to the first, and the result is known as a ' pinhead ' grain.

Other leathers, particularly seal skin, will assume a grain if treated in a similar way, but the finished effect is more beautiful in morocco than in any other skin. Curiously enough a still further procedure, that was much used by the great English binder T. J. Cobden Sanderson, has recently come into use. It consists of ironing pinhead-grained morocco with a hot iron, with the effect of rendering the surface flatter and more fitted for delicate gold tooling, without losing at all the pattern of the grain artificially made evident. ' Crushed ' morocco is very popular for choice small books.

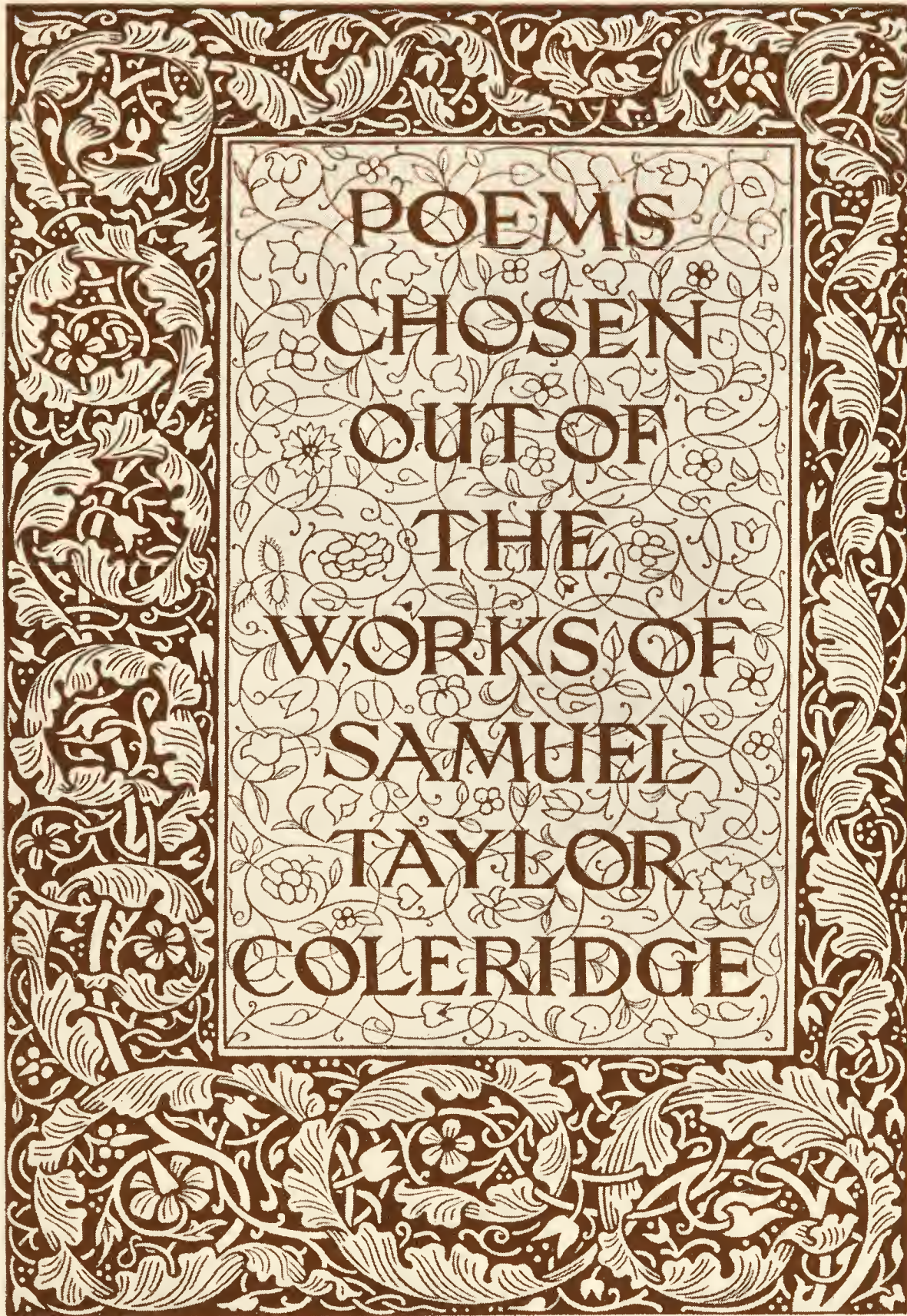
William Morris was intended for the Church and was for some time at Exeter College, Oxford. There he met Edward Burne-Jones, who became a lifelong friend, and helped him very materially in the decoration of the beautiful books he printed.

About 1860, however, Morris decided to devote his

energies to the betterment of decorative art in England, which he rightly considered was then in a poor state. He set up as a house decorator in Red Lion Square and afterwards in Queen Square. He presently inherited a fortune which enabled him to undertake many responsibilities which he could not otherwise have done, and he set up establishments which under his able superintendence produced some of the finest technical works of art that have ever been made in England.

Morris was a great craftsman and personally watched every process in his many workshops. We owe to him a great advance in the arts of weaving, tapestry making, dyeing, and house fittings of all kinds, and his influence in these and in cognate matters is still strongly felt.

He wrote some fine poetry and studied book production minutely, and in this he was much helped by his friend Emery Walker. He designed several new types, all of them very good, but his finest title-pages are woodcuts. Some of his types are small, but others are a good size, such as is used in the *Tale of Beowulf*, published in 1895. Morris's decorated pages are so fine and unapproachable



Wood-engraved Title-page to the edition of Coleridge's Poems
published by William Morris in 1896.

(Reduced by about one-third.)

that ever since his time books have tended to become plainer and plainer, as he has indeed reached the highest level for a printed book with illustrations. (Plate II.)

Morris's great edition of Chaucer with drawings by Burne-Jones, engraved by W. H. Hooper, is the finest book ever printed in England. It was issued in 1896. Morris did not put decorative work outside his books, but generally had them bound in white. In the case of the thin volumes they were usually bound in vellum and kept together by broad tapes which are arranged so as to come right round the book and tie in the front. He was curiously particular that in the tying of the tapes in a bow knot the two bows should be so arranged as to lie closely along the front edge of the leaves.

Our great English binder T. J. Cobden Sanderson gave up binding late in his life and took to printing. He set up the Dove's Press and printed several fine books there, helped by Mr. Emery Walker again, in some of which the old plan of using red capital letters was happily introduced.

Gold tooling was not only done on leather, but also

on velvet, which was a favourite material for covering books during the Tudor period. It is extremely decorative on velvet and has a singularly brilliant effect if looked at when straight in the light. If looked at sideways the gold tooling almost disappears, especially in the case of a new book in which the pile of the velvet is still thick. It is difficult to manage.

As far as I know gold tooling on velvet was first used in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Although books were bound in velvet for Henry VIII, they were not gold tooled, but ornamented with gold cord instead.

Queen Elizabeth had a Bible presented to her by the University of Oxford at Woodstock in September 1575. It was printed at Zurich in 1544, and on the edges are painted the arms of Oxford, so it is likely that it was bound there for the Queen. It is covered in green velvet and the royal arms are worked in coloured satin and appliqué in the centre of each side of the book. Directly on the velvet border on each side, impressed in gold, are the words ESTO FIDELIS VSQVE AD MORTEM ET DABO TIBI CORONAM VITAE APOC.

After this the use of gold directly on velvet bindings seems to have been lost sight of, but about the middle of the seventeenth century it was revived by Mary Collet, the very artistic niece of Nicholas Ferrar, at his 'Nunnery' at Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire. Ferrar made several large scrap-books, mostly Harmonies of the Gospels, in which he cut out parallel passages from the different writers and pasted them in side by side. Not only did he attend to the text, but he also pasted in numbers of prints cut out of books of all kinds, English and foreign, that he considered appropriate to the subject on any particular page. Mary Collet superintended the work of cutting out and pasting in of all these pieces, and also such manuscript additions as seemed necessary.

The Harmonies are all large, and four of them are bound in velvet, purple, or green, richly gold tooled with a central circular device and quarter circles in the corners. The gilding tools used on the bindings made at Little Gidding, which were also done by Mary Collet and her assistants, are the same as were used by Thomas and John Buck, the printers and binders to the University of Cam-

bridge, who sent one of their operatives to Little Gidding to teach the ladies the technicalities of the craft of book-binding, and no doubt lent them some of their gilding stamps. But one or two of the stamps found on Little Gidding bindings were very probably designed by the ladies themselves.

The remaining Little Gidding bindings are generally in black morocco and show the same general design, but the gold tooling on leather is much more elaborate than it is on velvet (Plate XVI), as velvet itself is such a beautiful material that the ladies concerned only put enough gold tooling upon it to serve as a foil to set off its full effect of colour.

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SPECIMENS OF BINDING

PLATE III
BYZANTINE
EIGHTH CENTURY

about 10 × 6 inches

Authorities differ considerably about the binding figured here, and the actual date is probably to be found between the earliest and the latest dates generally assigned to it. Svenigorodskoi considers it shows signs of seventh-century work, and compares it with somewhat similar work of that date at Monza; Labarte puts it about the ninth century; and L. Pasini about the twelfth.

There may, indeed, be some work of all these dates on it, as it is quite possible that the centre enamel was made before the ten circular ones were, and the curious border made later still to frame the precious old enamels in a decorative way.

The border is very curious; it is cloisonné work in silver wire, but encloses small pieces of cut-glass and is not enamelled. Work of a like sort is on a very fine seventh-century 'theca' at Monza, but in this case the cloisons are filled with flat garnets cut and polished, instead of glass.

The under cover is plain, as usual with altar books.

It is in the Treasury of St. Mark's Cathedral at Venice.

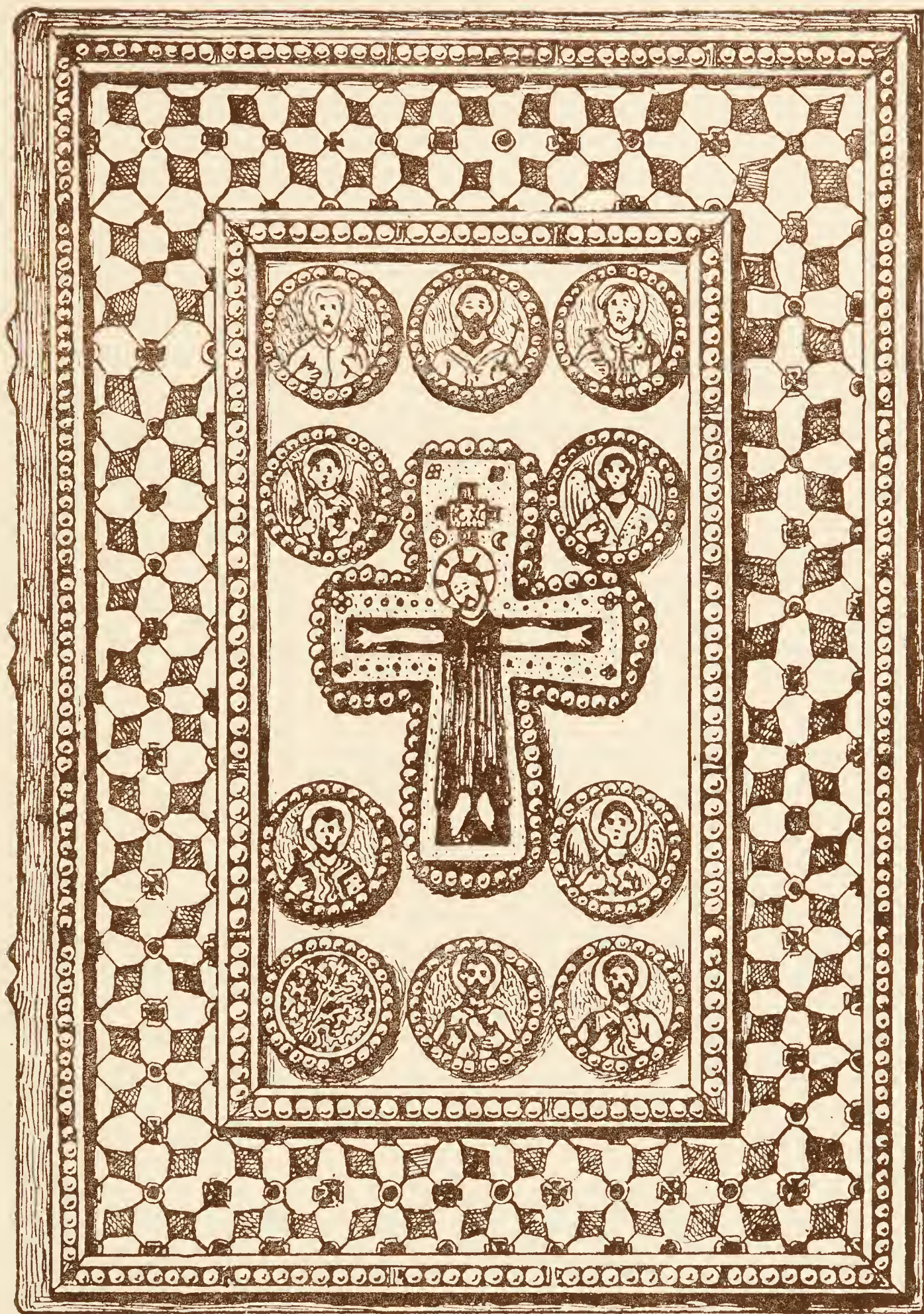


PLATE IV
BYZANTINE

TENTH CENTURY

9 × 8 inches

The so-called Gospels of Charlemagne were written about the tenth century. The MS. is bound in thick oaken boards, the upper of which is beautifully ornamented with plates of gold variously worked, cloisonné enamels and jewels. The original work on the side panels has evidently been badly used and much of it has been replaced with later work of an inferior sort. The old designs seem, however, to have been preserved in many cases, and it is also possible that the older panels may have been repaired in places. This may well have been done in the case of the small filigree gold work, and it is work that can be well done by a skilful goldsmith and very difficult to detect. Enamels are difficult to repair, as if enough heat is applied to them to fuse new enamels into missing places the old enamels are very likely to chip off altogether. But if the old metallic cloisons remain new enamel can well be added throughout, and with a little skilled management an appearance of age can be obtained. But altogether the cover of this MS. is a highly satisfactory example of skilled restoration, mostly on old lines.

The figure of our Lord is a very fine example of repoussé work, said to be on gold, and the treatment of the drapery and surroundings is extremely fine. It is one of the best pieces of such work that can be found on any book now existing.

It was used as an altar book at the abbey church of St. Maurice d'Agaune, from which it was stolen in the fourteenth century. Then it got to Sion in the Rhone valley, who sold it in Paris at the Spitzer sale in 1893. It was probably also used as a pax. The lower cover is of red leather with a cross outlined in nails.

The legend, in white letters on blue ground, reads, 'Matheus et Marcus Lucas Sanctusque Johanne. Vox horu quatuor reboat te XPE Redemptor'. It has probably been re-enamelled to the old designs and colour.



PLATE V
GERMAN
TENTH CENTURY
10 × 8 inches

Latin Gospels probably written in Germany. The thick wooden boards are covered with leather, the lower side left plain, the upper side ornamented with copper-gilt plaques riveted on.

In the centre, on a background of scale pattern, is a cast figure of Christ, crowned and holding a book in his left hand, and the right hand held up in the attitude of benediction. The eyes are represented by two black beads. The border is set with large crystals cut *en cabochon*, but with a central ridge; the corner crystals are the largest.

In each corner of the central panel is a square panel of cloisonné enamel made in an ornamental design, but of later workmanship than the rest of the binding. They are most likely work of the fourteenth century and were probably added in France.

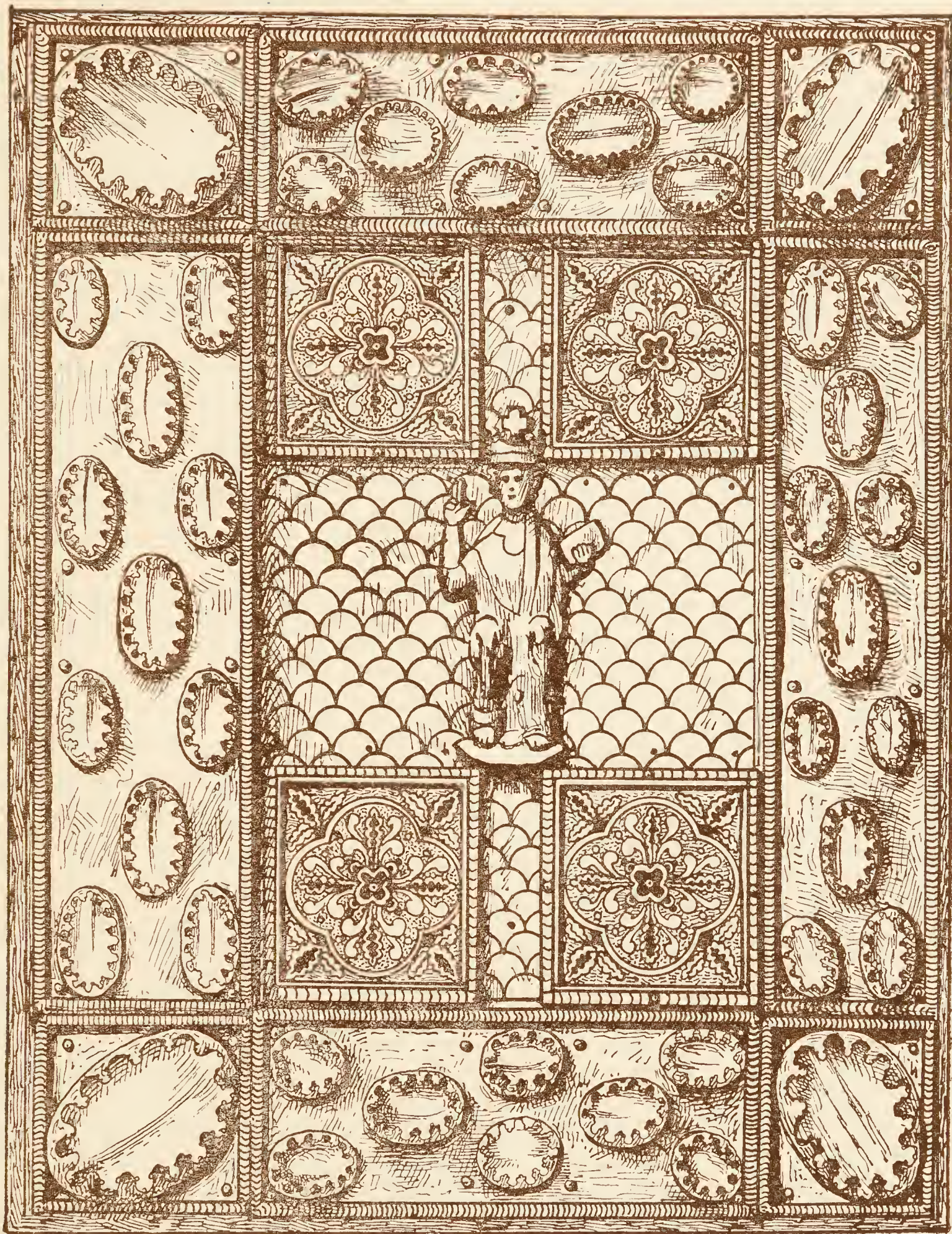


PLATE VI
BYZANTINE

ELEVENTH CENTURY

about 9 × 7 inches

Chryselephantine meant originally something that was made of gold and ivory, but the extended use of these precious substances as well as others caused the term to have a wider signification, so that now it can be applied to any work of art that is made up of various precious and semi-precious pieces.

Examples of this work in bindings are naturally scarce, because not only are the jewels themselves rare, but the workmanship upon them requires to be well designed and carried out by skilled goldsmiths, gem-cutters and enamellers.

Probably the finest specimens of ancient chryselephantine bindings can be seen in the Treasury of St. Mark's Cathedral at Venice, and the one illustrated is perhaps the best of them. It appears to be the work of about the eleventh century, but it covers a fifteenth-century copy of the Gospels. Many of these fine old bindings have left their original destination and are now found over more recent work, and have often been made to fit, with new edges and borders.

The present example, which is very brilliant in colour, is founded upon a base of silver gilt, covered with ornamental overlays of gold and jewels. The centre figure of the Archangel Michael is shown in low relief. His face is cut in pink agate, the eyes and lips painted in colour. The hair is enamelled brown and set with cut emeralds or amethysts, and the nimbus is also ornamentally enamelled. The wings are of gold very skilfully modelled, and the dress of gold is ornamented with designs in cloisonné enamels. In the right hand is a sword with a pommel made of a large pearl; in the left hand is an orb of white agate with a cross at the top set with a ruby and pearls. The background is elaborately decorated with cloisonné enamels. The outer border is a late addition, but set with ancient cloisonné enamels.

The three circular Byzantine enamel portraits at the top represent Christ in the centre; on his right is St. Peter, and on his left St. Menna. The figures in the side ovals, each of which carries a spear and a shield and has a name above it, are, on the right, St. Theodore repeated, with Demetrius and Nestor below. On the left are SS. Procopius and George, with SS. Eustachius and Mercurius below.



PLATE VII
THE STOWE MISSAL
CUMDACH. ELEVENTH CENTURY

$6\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$ inches

The Stowe Missal, with its case, belonged originally to the monastery of Lorrha in Tipperary, and after several various ownerships it belonged to the Duke of Buckingham at Stowe, hence its name.

It afterwards belonged to the Earl of Ashburnham, and from him was purchased for the nation in 1883, and is now in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy at Dublin.

Both sides are very ornamentally treated, and a cross is the leading motive both on the upper and lower sides. The upper side has been a good deal restored, but the lower side has not.

The upper side cross has a large crystal in the centre set over pink foil, and other smaller ones at the ends of the cross. There are some small enamels also, but they are probably additions of recent date; they may, however, indicate that enamels were there originally, as their use was known in Ireland at an early date.

The quarters on the upper side show silver-gilt plaques engraved with figures, the Crucifixion, probably Mary Magdalen, the Virgin and Child, and a Bishop. Those on the lower side are filled with silver plates cut in open work and set over gilt bronze. The edges of the box are ornamented with curious small cast-work set on open-work silver panels over gilt bronze.

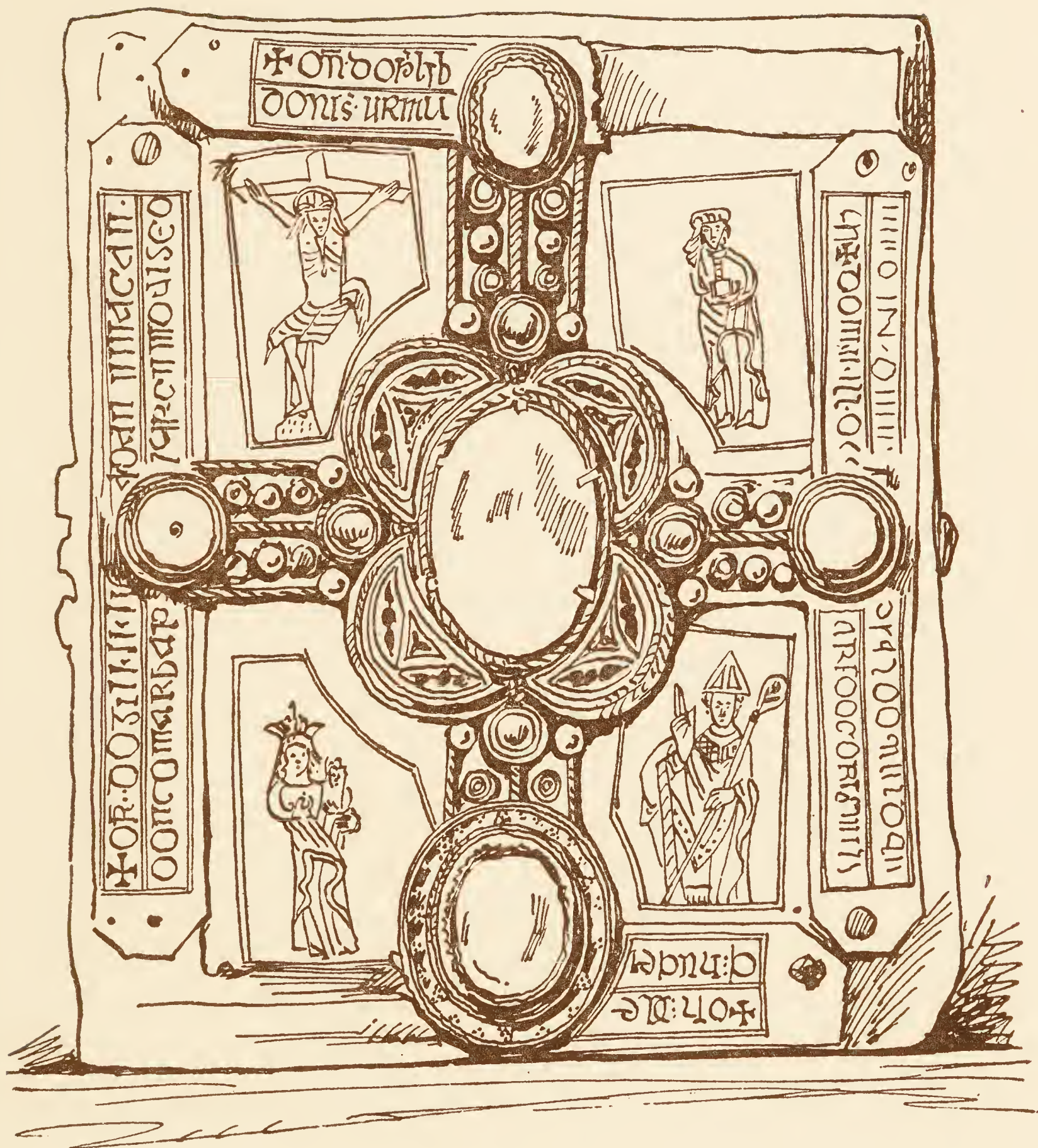


PLATE VIII
IRISH
ABOUT THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

$13\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ inches

The manuscript of the Lindau Gospels is of about the ninth century. The book belonged to the Abbey of Noble Canonesses at Lindau, near Lake Constance. The Abbey was broken up in 1803 and the treasures belonging to it were divided among the officials. The book became the property of the Earl of Ashburnham, and was sold by him in 1883.

The under side shows an older piece of work than the upper side, and has been originally made, in all likelihood, for an Irish manuscript. The main design is that of a cross pattée with a granulated edge, the inner borderings are set with flat garnets over foil, and the centres of the various circles are of mother-of-pearl, turquoise or garnet. The four half-length figures at the inner ends of the arms of the cross are all alike, and probably represent our Lord. They are done in cloisonné enamels, and among the colours used is a rare orange, which is known to have been used by Irish enamellers at an early date.

The quarters between the arms of the cross are filled with bronze plaques very finely cut with intricate interlacing curves with exaggerated animal forms of true Celtic character.

Many of the gems are of crystal or glass. On the back of the binding is the date 1594, which probably refers to the repairs and additions which have been done in a different style to the older part, as, for instance, the engraved corners showing the Evangelists with their emblems.

Irish missionaries went to the Continental monasteries freely in early Christian times, and they were fine craftsmen and enamellers. Some of them probably made this cover, and embodied in it their national taste in decoration (page 22).



PLATE IX
GERMAN
c. FOURTEENTH CENTURY

12 × 9 inches

Latin Gospels in German ninth-century MS., bound in thick wooden boards covered with silver plates chased, repoussé and jewelled. The inner panel is gilded and shows in the centre a seated figure of Christ in the attitude of benediction, and in each corner a cabochon cut jewel set within a triple scroll with leaves at the end of each stalk. The original jewels are lost and those now in their places were put in by Messrs. Rundell and Bridge in 1838, for Dr. Butler, Bishop of Lichfield, to whom the book belonged. The outer edge shows a floral curved scroll and each side has two jewels, all of them cabochon cut except one topaz, which is faceted—these stones were also added by Rundell and Bridge, and they are garnets and emeralds, amethyst and one topaz. In the corners were the emblems of the Evangelists, done in translucent cloisonné enamels, and some niello work, but only the eagle of St. John and the calf of St. Luke now remain; the blanks inserted in the other two corners were no doubt put in by Rundell and Bridge.

The lower cover is also covered with thin silver with a fine ivy-leaf pattern all over the background and an Agnus Dei in the centre, but no jewels or enamels.

In hollows beneath the figure of Christ and the Agnus Dei are lumps of wax enclosing relics of saints. Such relics were often preserved in hollows of the thick mediæval bindings, sometimes behind the central ornament and sometimes behind the larger jewels.



PLATE X
E N G L I S H
SIXTEENTH CENTURY
About 13 × 8 inches

Thomas Berthelet gradually allowed the strong Italian style of gold tooling that he used on his earliest bindings to die out. This example shows how he soon developed a strong English style, which nevertheless makes use of small Italian stamps like the largest ones in the corners of this binding.

The book was bound for Henry VIII during the time that Katherine Parr was Queen, as her initial shows with that of the King.

The royal coat of arms shows in the centre, with the supporters of the greyhound of Nevill and the dragon of Wales. The Tudor rose and the badges of the portcullis of De Beaufort and the fleur-de-lys of France also show in several places.

The volume belonged to E. Gordon Duff, librarian of the Rylands Library at Manchester, and he was especially interested in the Italianate stamps in the corners. Some volumes in similar bindings that belonged to the library of Henry VIII were given to the Bodleian Library at Oxford in 1604 by Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham.

Henry VIII altered his supporters in 1528 and substituted a lion for the greyhound of Nevill, but his book stamp does not seem to have been altered from the older form seen on this binding. The lion and the dragon used as supporters show on the coinage of the time.

Gregorii Opera. Paris. 1523.

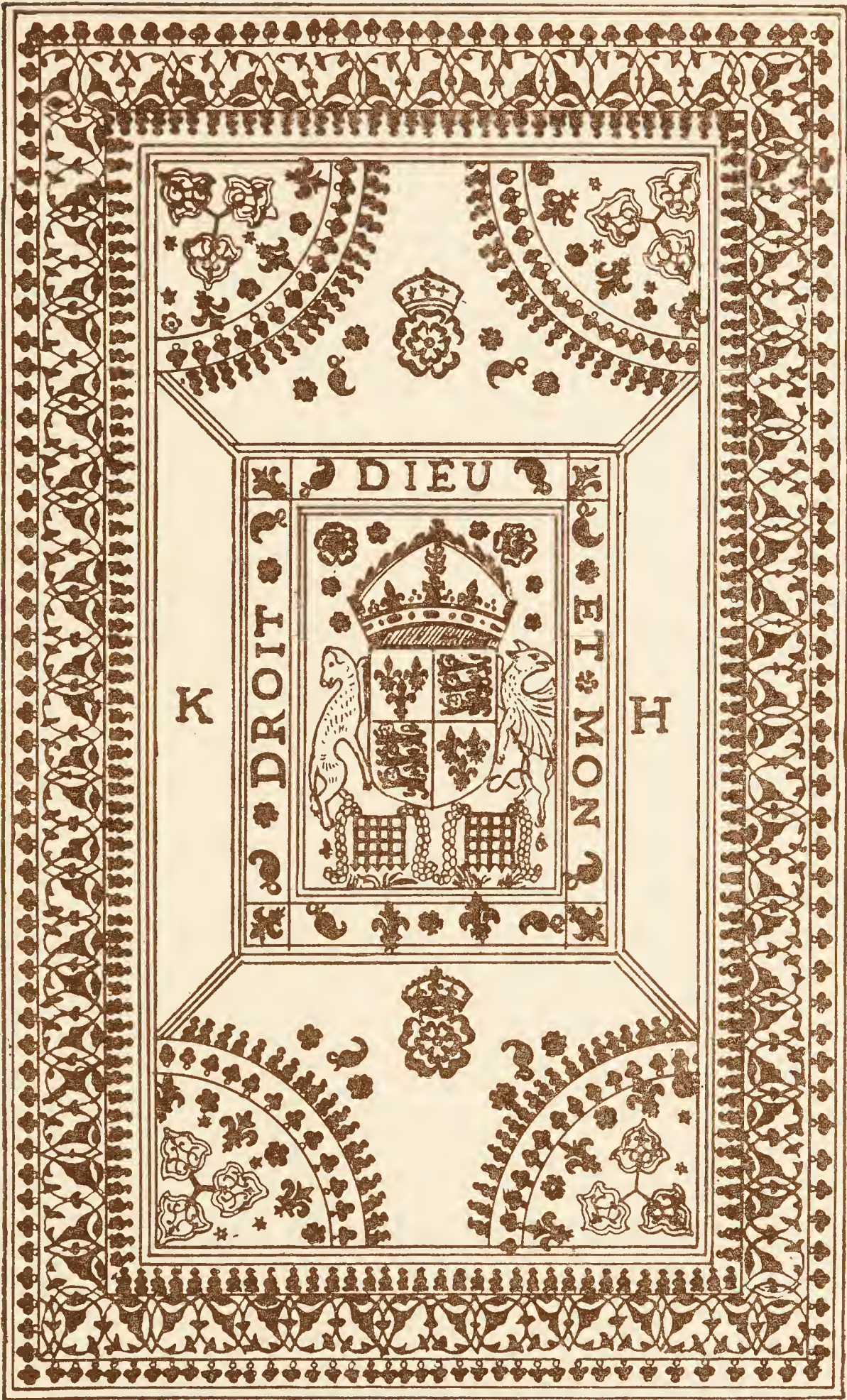


PLATE XI
E N G L I S H
SIXTEENTH CENTURY
6 × 4 inches

Cameo binding in calf, showing four figures of saints : St. John the Evangelist holding a cup with a dragon and a palm branch ; St. Barbara with a book and a palm branch, and by her side her tower with three windows ; St. Catherine of Alexandria, Queen of Egypt, with book and sword. She became a Christian and was condemned to be broken on the wheel by the Emperor Maxentius of Rome in the fourth century. On the Queen's approach the wheel broke to pieces, but she was beheaded soon afterwards. She is shown standing on the Emperor Maxentius, and with the broken wheel in the background.

In the last quarter is a figure of St. Nicolas with mitre and crozier and by his side a tub with three boys in it, who had been cut in pieces, but one is coming back to life at the saint's wish.

The border has sprays of oak and artichoke and figures of birds and wyverns and the initials of the binder, S. G.

The Mirrour of Our Lady. London. 1530.



PLATE XII
FRENCH

SIXTEENTH CENTURY

about 11 × 7 inches

Ptolemy, Geographia. Rome, 1490

A copy of *Ptolemy's Geographia*, printed at Rome in 1490, and beautifully illuminated for one of the Frescobaldi family at Florence. It afterwards belonged to Mary Queen of Scots and bears her binding stamp made when she was Queen of France and wife of Francis II. But binding stamps are very strong and Queen Mary may have taken it back to Scotland with her in 1560 and had it used on some of her favourite books. In the present case it does not fit well.

The binding of the *Ptolemy* is one of the finest existing examples of the Fanfare style of gold tooling on leather considered to have been invented by Nicolas Eve. It is bound in brown morocco and has in the centre the monogram composed of the Greek letter Φ , standing for F, and M, ensigned with the crown of France. The monogram reads equally correctly upside down. The surrounding garter bears the words 'SA VERTU MATIRE', being an anagram of the name Marie Stewart.

The book belonged to the Duke of Marlborough and then to Sir Wollaston Franks; it has now gone to America.

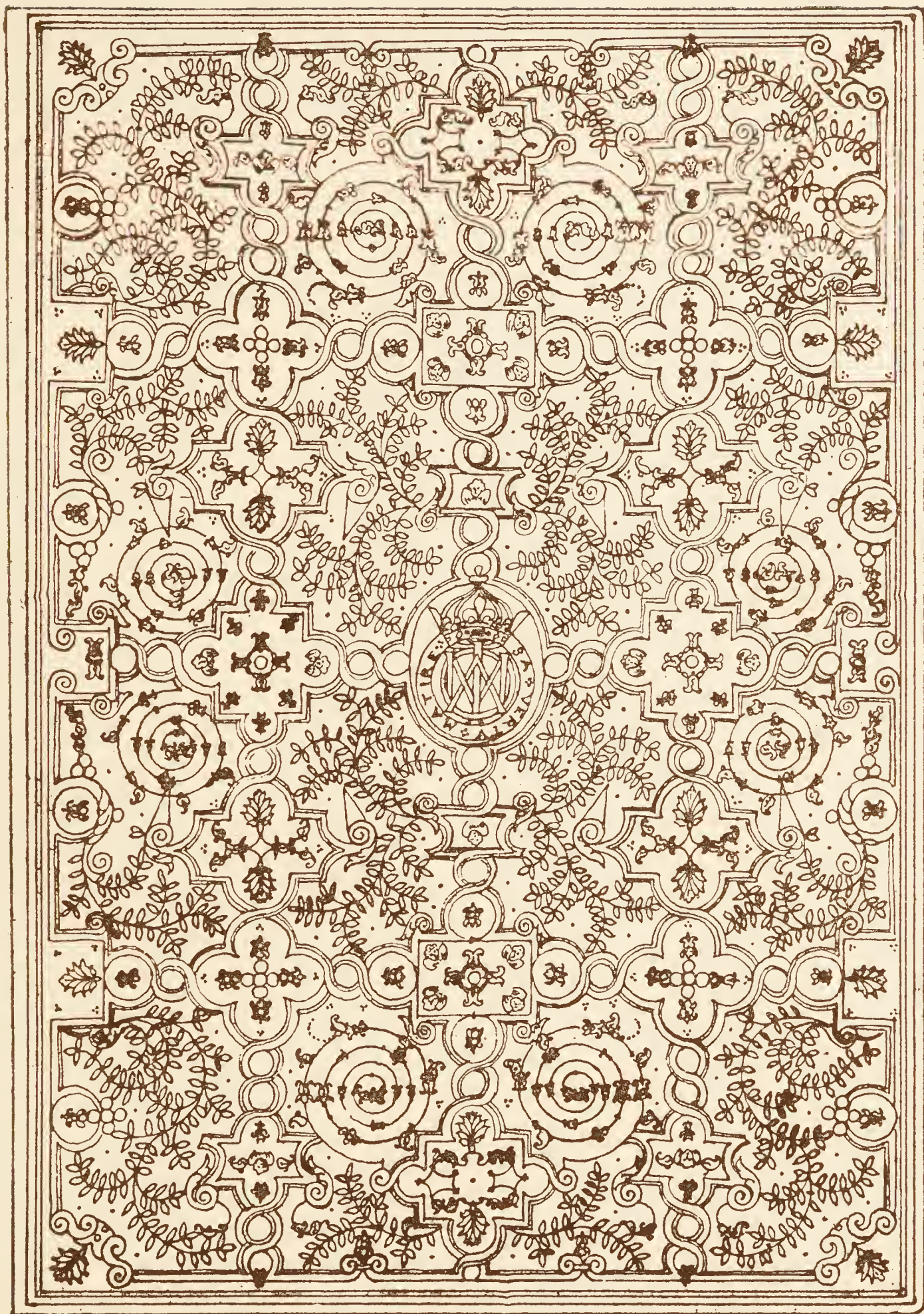


PLATE XIII
I T A L I A N
SIXTEENTH CENTURY
 $12\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ inches

It is not certain, but a general idea is prevalent that the bindings made for Grolier Visc. d'Aguisy when he was in Italy have the gold tooling upon them done with stamps that are cut 'solid' in distinction from stamps that are cut 'azurés', or with small lines cut across them. Gold tooling showing stamps cut in the azuré fashion are supposed to indicate French workmanship.

The present example, bound in brown calf and gold tooled with 'solid' stamps, is therefore an example of the Italian form of gold tooling ; it shows a very gracefully designed interlaced fillet, which is stained black, as well as some of the fleurons. The motto 'Portio mea Domine sit in terra viventium' shows in the upper cover, and the words 'io Grolierii et Amicorum' are on the lower cover.

The book is Theodoret's *MS. Pauli epistolas commentarius*, printed in Florence in 1552.

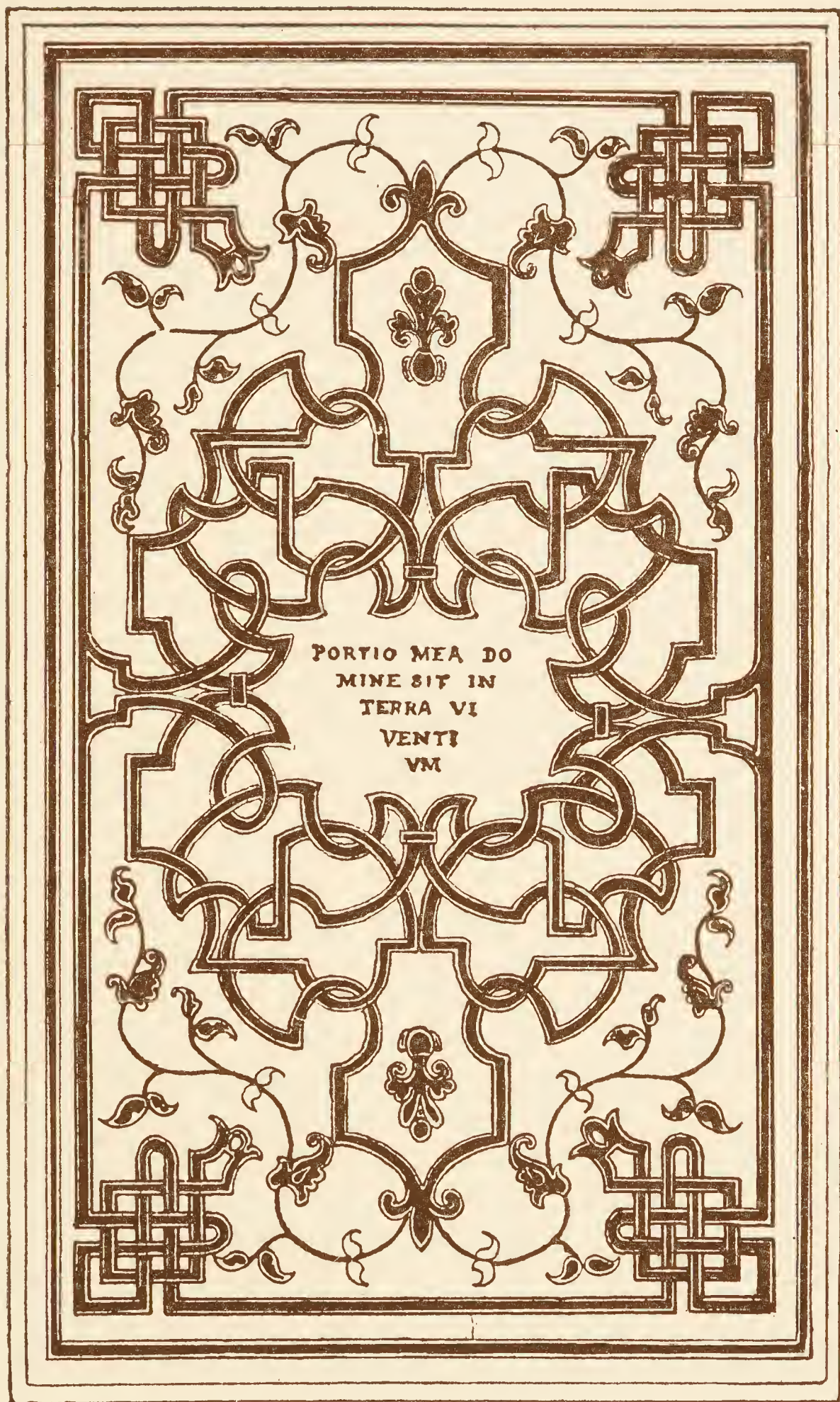


PLATE XIV
ITALIAN
SIXTEENTH CENTURY
about 12 × 8 inches

Oriental influence shows in many instances in the case of Venetian bindings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—not only in the gold tooling itself but even in the style of decoration used on the boards of a book.

A common form of decoration used on bindings of Oriental MSS. was the use of deeply recessed centre panels, with corner-pieces also recessed. In all cases of this sort an arabesque scroll work shows in the recessed panel itself. These panels were no doubt cut out of pieces of metal in the surface of which designs were cut in intaglio, so that on the book panels these designs show in low relief.

The idea is one of much value, and the clever Venetian bookbinders exploited it cleverly. They often made their boards of two pieces of cardboard and pierced the upper one as required, so that they produced the sunk panels to perfection. Then they added their own highly decorative gilding work, both in the form of gilt spaces as well as gold tooling, with great effect.

The volume illustrated shows both original Oriental feeling as well as its highly monumental development in Italy.

The panels are inlaid with black or brown leather, so that the arabesques stand out clearly in these colours on a rich gold background.

Piccolomini, *Della Institutione Morale*, Libri XII. Venice. 1560.



PLATE XV
E N G L I S H
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

13 × 9 inches

In England at the beginning of the seventeenth century, we had no great binder, so far as we know at present, but the man who designed the cover illustrated here must have been an admirable workman who knew the work of contemporary French workmen very well. Many of the small peculiarities of the rich gold-tooled design are strongly reminiscent of the work of Nicolas Eve. But the bold style of the workmanship altogether is more virile than the French.

The coat of arms shows the addition of the Scottish and Irish coats as used for the first time by James I, and where the heraldic rules admit of it, pieces of red leather are very effectively inlaid. It is a magnificent specimen of gold tooling, and it is unfortunate that we are not sure of its author.

The royal binders were John and Abraham Bateman, but their known work is very different from this. It is just possible that it was done for James I, by his Scottish binder, John Gibson, the peculiarities of whose work are not at present known, but he is supposed to have bound the manuscript of James's *ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΟΝ ΔΨΠΟΝ*, which the King of Scotland wrote for his son Henry, which is magnificently bound in velvet with gold overlays.

Thevet, *Les vraies Pourtraits et Vies des Hommes illustrés*. Paris. 1584.

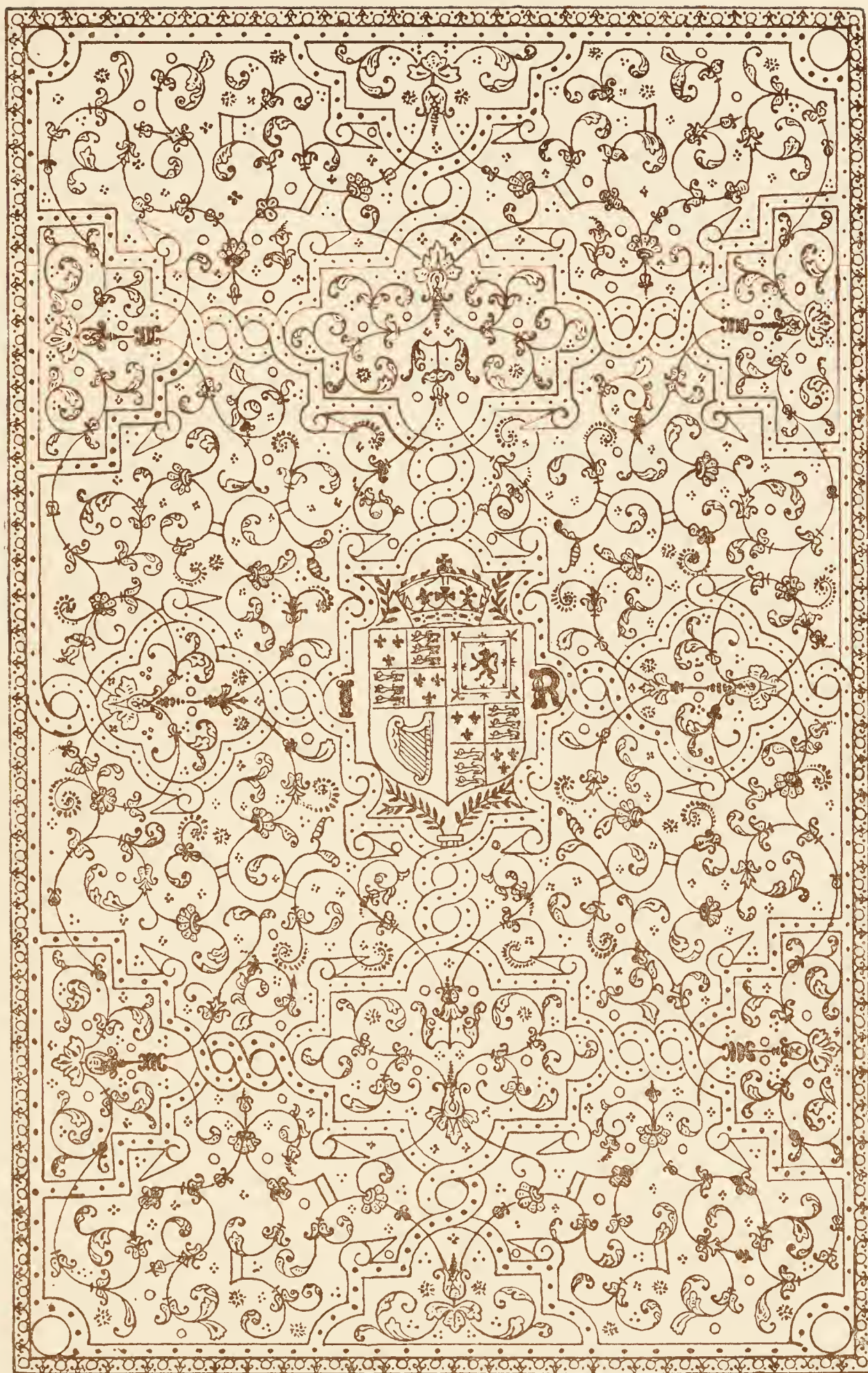


PLATE XVI
ENGLISH
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

19 × 14 inches

Nicholas Ferrar went abroad in 1613 in the retinue of the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I. He visited Germany, Italy, and Spain, and on his return he went for a short time into Parliament, but in 1625, being afraid of the Plague, he left London and settled for a while at Bourne in Cambridgeshire. The manor of Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire belonged to Ferrar's mother, and he and the rest of his family all went to live there about 1630. With them came also the family of John Collet, his brother-in-law. Nicholas was ordained Deacon by Bishop Laud, and spent the rest of his life in managing the 'Arminian Nunnery' and exercising all kinds of charitable and religious work in the neighbourhood.

Ferrar had collected during his foreign travel large numbers of illustrated Bibles and any other religious books he came across, and he set apart a special chamber under the care of his niece, Mary Collet, to arrange and bind Harmonies of different parts of the Bible, all profusely illustrated with prints carefully cut out and pasted in as nearly as possible to the portion of the text they most nearly fit. Charles I took much interest in this work, and visited Little Gidding.

Not only did the ladies of Little Gidding compile the text and plates for the Harmonies, but they also bound them and adorned their bindings with gold tooling. Eleven of these bound Harmonies still exist; four of these are in velvet, purple, or green, five are in morocco, one is in calf, and one is in vellum.

The workmanship in all these precious volumes is in every way excellent. The ladies were taught bookbinding and gold tooling by emissaries from Messrs. Buck, the Cambridge University binders, and many of the stamps used at Little Gidding are Buck's stamps, but several seem to have been made for special use by Mary Collet and her assistants. Also they invented the excellent general design of a circular centre with quarter circles of the same stamp in each corner. The gold tooling is itself bold and strong, but in numerous instances the arrangement of the small stamps is non-professional.

The work is the first amateur bookbinding done in England and also the first work done by lady binders. The volume illustrated is a *Concordance of the Four Evangelists*, said to have been made for Charles I in 1631. It was presented to the nation with the rest of the old royal library by George II in 1757, and is now in the British Museum.

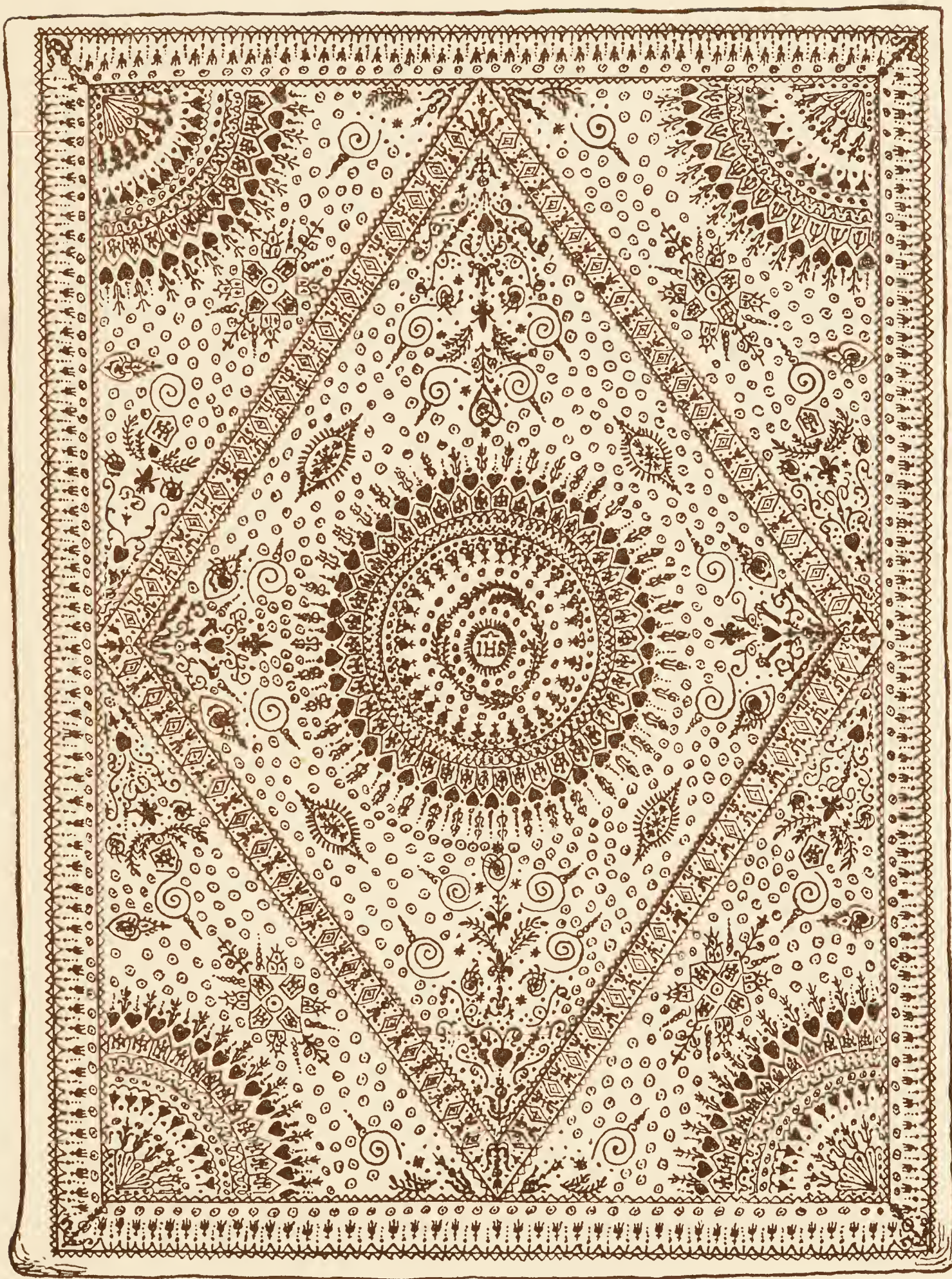


PLATE XVII
FRENCH
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

$11\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ inches

Among great French bookbinders and gilders, the name of Le Gascon is pre-eminent because he invented the simple expedient of cutting lines across the usual gold-tooling stamps, thereby enabling them to produce a dotted effect instead of a right line. This effect is called pointillé, and it has been very largely used ever since.

The first mention of Le Gascon is in the Register of the Guild of St. Jean Latran of 1622, but it does not give his real name, and it is not even now definitely known who he was, but among other attributions probably his identity with Jean Gillede, who was a Gascon, is most likely.

Most of Le Gascon's bindings are quite small, indeed most of the finest French bindings at any time are small, but the example I have chosen for illustration is of a fair size, about $11\frac{1}{2} \times 8$ inches. It shows Le Gascon's design of an interlacing fillet with the spaces filled with very delicate pointillé scrolls and designs. It is bound in red morocco with alternate inlays of buff, olive, and marbled leather.

The general plan of an interlaced fillet for the decoration of a book-binding is an old one, and it was used in England by Thomas Berthelet in the early sixteenth century, but the spaces between the curves of the fillet were only ornamented with small designs ; in the case of Le Gascon, the spaces are entirely filled with sparkling gold tooling. The sparkling effect is due to the fact that the impressions from the small tools vary in depth, so that however the light may fall upon them many of them catch the light differently from the others. In fact much of it looks as if the work done upon it is more elaborate than it really is, but, nevertheless, down to the smallest dot the position of each stamp is accurately measured out and decided before the final operation of gilding is commenced. Now in the British Museum.—*Chacon Historia Belli Dacici, etc., Romae, 1616.*

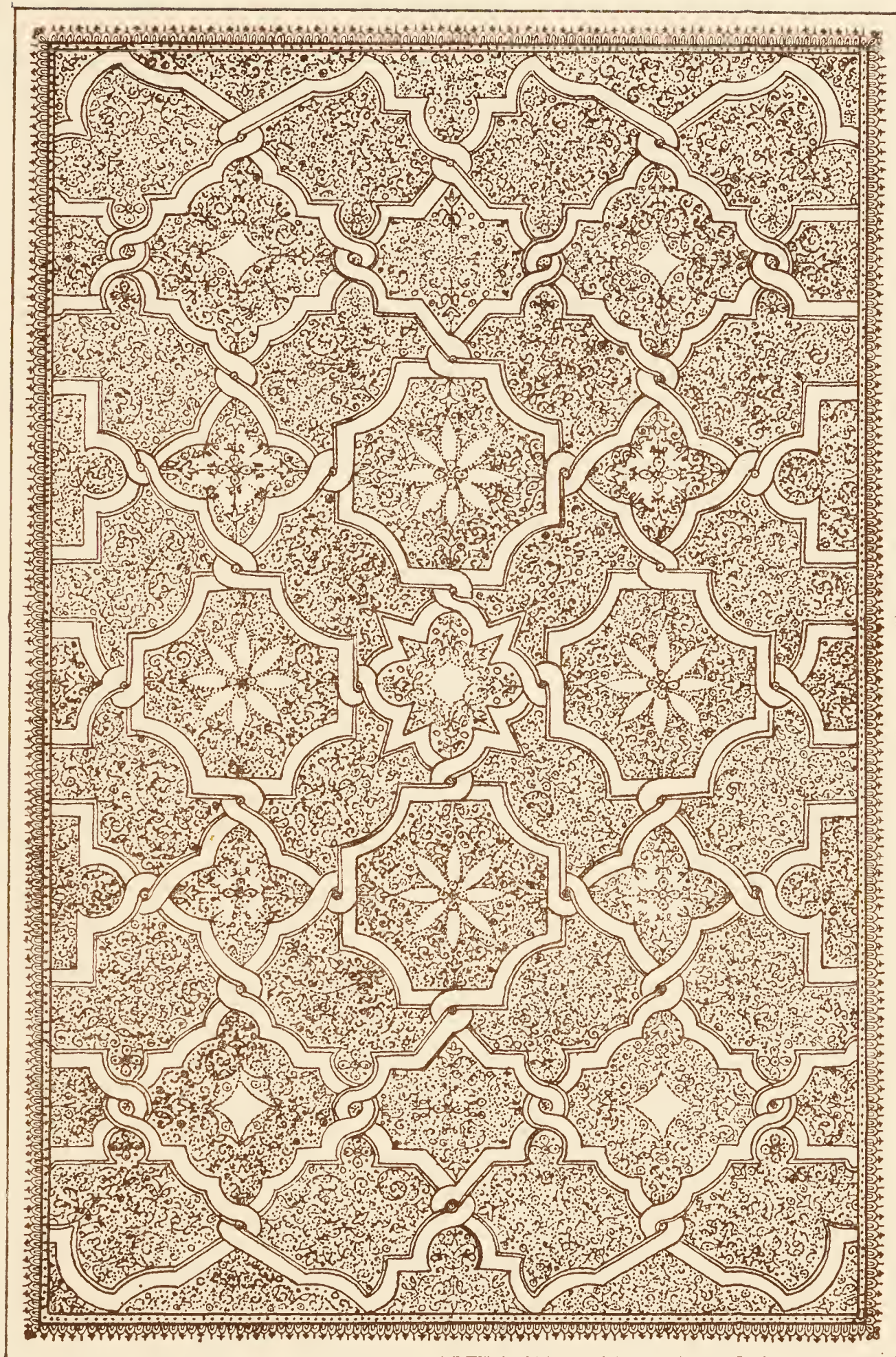


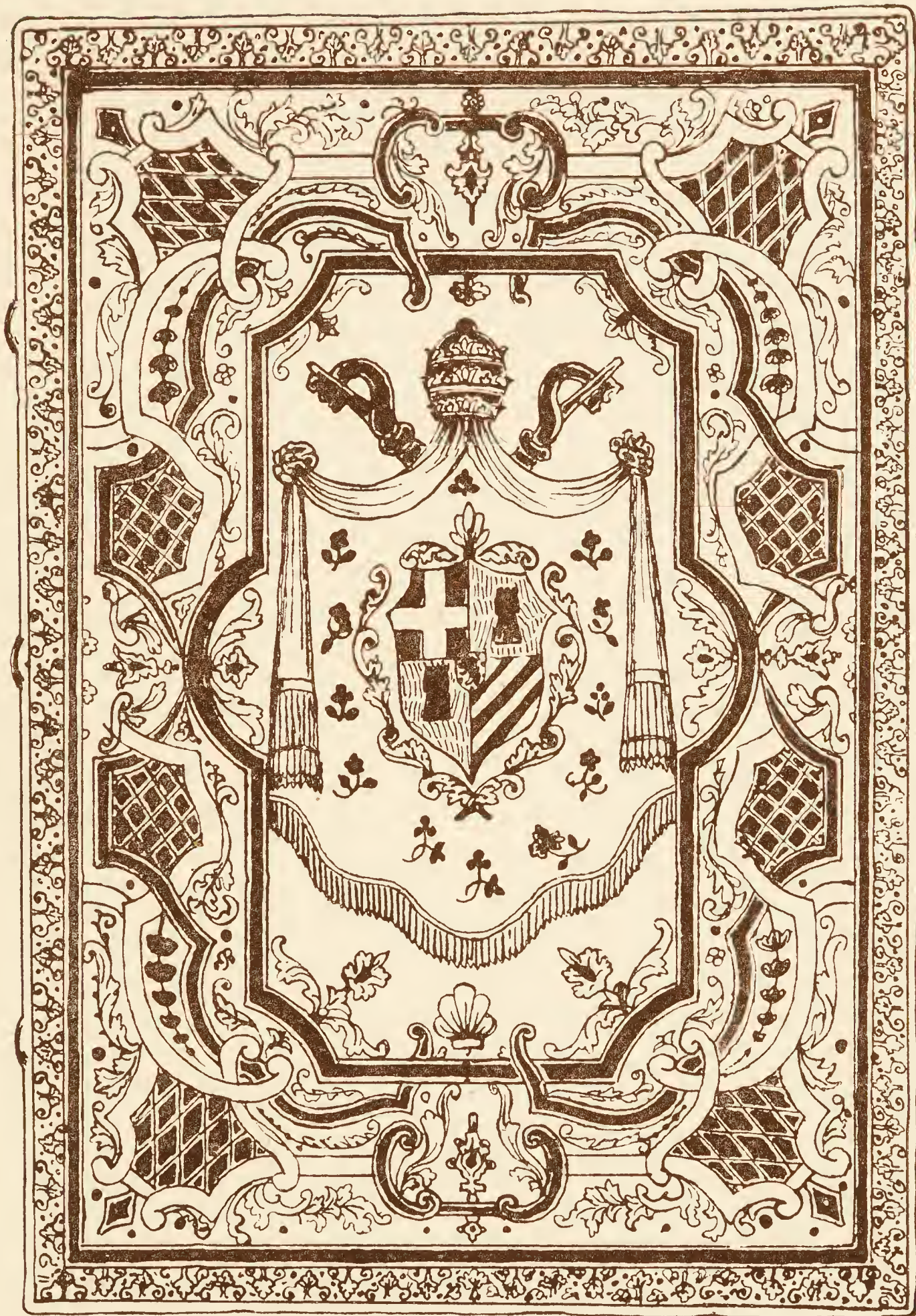
PLATE XVIII
I T A L I A N
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
10 × 7 inches

The Popes and Cardinals of Rome have given us a fine series of heraldic bindings as they have always been very much interested in their decorative coats of arms. In many instances individual bearings in the arms have been used as supplementary ornaments in the decorative setting.

The typical example I show was made for Pope Clement XIII, and shows the arms of the Rezzonico family set on a mantle with the Papal Tiara and cross keys at the top.

It is bound in calf, coloured and gold tooled.

Oddi, *Constitutionos Synodales*. Viterbo. 1763.



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Printed in Great Britain by
Butler & Tanner Ltd.,
Frome and London

